

# The New England Conscience

With typical examples by  
James Phinney Munroe



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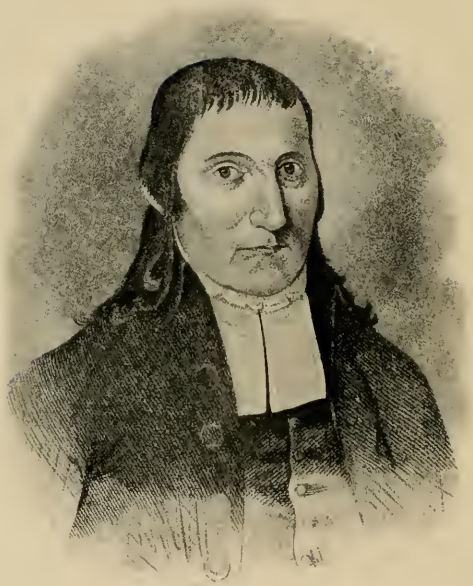












JONATHAN EDWARDS  
*High-Priest of the New England Conscience*



# The New England Conscience

*With Typical Examples by*

**JAMES PHINNEY MUNROE**

*Author of "The Educational Ideal," "New Demands in Education," "Adventures of an Army Nurse," "The Munro Clan," Etc.*



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THE NEW ENGLAND CONSCIENCE





THE  
New England  
CONSCIENCE

I

THE NEW ENGLAND CONSCIENCE

**T**HE old New England Conscience was an admirable selective force, picking out the ruggedest from the English stock, strengthening it by a fight against the wilderness, proscribing from contact with it all idleness, ungodliness and frivolity. A good means to an important end, but in itself an ill-favored thing. Economizing and concentrating the forces necessary to found America, it was narrow as avarice, morbid as egoism. It exalted harsh, unlovely deeds into Heaven-inspired acts, and was blind to all human purposes but death. Those early New Englanders, condemning the symbols of formalism, were slaves to form. Their spiritual life was a ceaseless ceremonial, their pious observances were rigid rules of etiquette without which one could obtain neither favor nor even audience of the Almighty.

This spirit of caste, largely induced by their geographical isolation, kept our ancestors "not provincial but parochial." It fostered a condition of life and a type of character doubtless never again to be possi-

ble in the world's history. Having done its work, having founded soundly and peopled strongly an exceptional region, the New England conscience had no further necessity of being. Those whom it now tortures with its hot pincers of doubt and self-reproach are sacrificed to a cause long since won. It is not now, as it was in Edwards' time, "a common Thing, that Persons have had such a Sense of their own Sinfulness, that they have thought themselves to be the worst of all, and that none ever was so vile as they." On the contrary, the modern tendency is to envelop one's self and all one's neighbors in a broad mantle of indiscriminating charity.

The genuine New England conscience, therefore, is becoming as rare as those Saurian monsters whose lonely survivals occasionally affright the sailor. It is no less an anachronism than the formal, mannered speech in which its dread decisions were embodied. Both demanded leisure, and haste is the dominant characteristic of to-day. The not-yet-forgotten packet boats, favored by winds and currents, sometimes crossed the turbulent Atlantic in two weeks. We, burning five daily three-hundred tons of coal, follow a great circle straight from shore to shore and call ourselves landed when we sight the outermost beacon. Having made the discovery that luxury—the material reward of life—is mainly a question of transportation, we are striving to annihilate time and space. We put the tropics on wheels to stimulate our palates, fling ourselves around the world for a summer's holiday, and dream of seeing and hearing Covent Garden by cable.

Our years, if we care to make them so, are Cathay cycles with the tedium distilled away. Already we are launching aerial ships and are turning inquisitive, neighborly eyes towards Mars. The insoluble mysteries of yesterday are the schoolboy's reading-lesson of to-day; and the Land of the Anthropophagi is the picnic-ground of the tourist. The meanest among us must have such a stock of common knowledge as, a century ago, would have made a brave show at college. Our careers must start at a point where those of many of our ancestors ended. Their anxious, year-long problems have become our five-minute hesitations, their crises—two or three in a lifetime—our daily experiences. Americans are now not only of the world, they are of a world that knows and avails itself of steam and electricity, that finds the air too dull a medium for intercommunication and seeks to use in place of it the subtler ethers.

Moreover, we have emerged not only from bucolic, but also from national isolation. We have substituted the *demi-tasse* for pie. While Americans stood like village gossips measuring one another with eyes of censure, having no standards beyond their own pettiness, they were forced into hypocrisy, were abnormally sensitive, pharisaical, bombastic. They had no choice but to walk in the path of tradition, a path, unfortunately, which led back to the wilderness days when there was little except toil, bitter privation, narrow interests, no joy in life. Treading this narrow road, our forebears dared not play, dared scarcely think of a world different from that in which they found themselves.

lest through these heresies they should incur the reproach of being un-American.

Within the past fifty years we have broken through the imaginary hedges which shut us out from so much of the brightness and freedom of existence. Within the next twenty-five years we shall have become the most cosmopolitan country in the world. Adaptable, vigorous, acute, we have made that difficult first trespass upon the territory of civilizations older, richer, in many ways better than ours, and it will require but another generation for us to invade every corner of them, appropriating all that can make us happier and that can add to our wealth in those things of life which endure.

Because we are subjugating nature and living somewhat at ease, are we therefore materialistic or, as Carlyle will have it, swinish? Rather were we such in being slaves, as swine are, to the grosser elements of nature. Because we are living rapidly and richly are we therefore reckless? Rather were we lumpish in not learning the secrets that govern time and space. Because the work time diminishes and the play time increases, and even work, with some wise souls, is becoming a sort of play, are we therefore frivolous and spendthrift? Rather a thousand times spendthrift were we in wasting and abusing this gift of life in hard, dismal labor, unblessed by a glimpse of the paradise of true pleasure whose unbarred gate we refused even to push open.

In this process of great change, however, the America of the newspapers is, without question, flauntingly materialistic. That it should be so tem-

porarily is wholly natural; that it should remain so is utterly beyond belief. For there are new forces every day growing, strengthening and taking definite shape which are certain to counteract the pervading materialism of modern life. Those forces are the new conscience, which localizes heaven and hell within the individual instead of beyond the stars; the new religion of service which finds His work waiting to be done on every street corner; and the new gospel, that of physical, mental and spiritual simplicity.

This modern type of conscience has developed new concepts of religion. Our churches may be emptier of worshippers than when the tythingman held legal sway; but our streets and houses and offices are fuller of the real presence of God. The women's clubs, the men's gatherings, the various social organizations of which every American hamlet has at least one are, most of them, when viewed too closely, rather absurd; looked at in the aggregate, however, they are magnificent. For they signalize the final emancipation of New England and the New England spirit from the reign of that selfish individualism which sought only its own salvation. The modern individualists, with their flaunting of vulgar wealth, with their disregard of others' rights, with their legal and illegal grasping of everything within their reach, hold still, of course, the centre of the stage; but the real work of civilization is being done by those thousands and tens of thousands who, wittingly or unwittingly, are laboring for each other and for the uplifting of the world.

One of the most inspiring of books is that of Darwin upon earth-worms, wherein he shows that were it not for the making of leaf-mold and the stirring of the soil by these multitudinous, industrious creatures, the earth would yield no crops, and animals—and therefore man—would starve. We would like to feel ourselves under the guardianship of the stars; instead we must bow the knee to these poor, blind creatures whom we scarcely deign to use as bait for fish. We would like to believe that we are really governed by our elected rulers, we would like to think that our fashions are set by dukes and their millionaire duchesses, we would like to imagine that every step forward in civilization is taken by some panoplied St. George, declaiming in the limelight and running vice through its scaly body with the visible, triumphant sword of virtue. But it is better for us, it is better for the world that the real forces of society, of politics, of civilization are humble, silent, hidden, like the earth-worms, but, like them, are ceaselessly busy in making an ever stronger and richer moral soil for mankind.

We are fed daily in the press upon the shortcomings, vanities and corruptions of federal and state officials; but we hear almost nothing of those obscurer servants of the government who are working everywhere throughout the ramifications of the Republic,—this one protecting the public health, that one developing the national resources, the third opening a pathway for enlightenment, and all serving, not mechanically for mere pay, but zealously and eagerly for the upbuilding of a higher civiliza-

tion for America. We learn in letters six inches high when a millionaire divorces his wife or amuses himself in some other way; but we do not learn when this mother makes some great sacrifice for her children, when that father refuses to perjure himself lest he bring shame to his sons, when Smith, Brown and Robinson get together determined to make the little spot on which they live a better place. We know from iterated and reiterated "muck-raking" how much is stolen, squandered and given in bribes in our vast, extravagant cities; but we have almost no way of finding out that the same slums which are supposed to breed these evil conditions are filled with men and women who love their adopted country, who are proud of their city and who would like to have it the boast rather than the shame of America, but who do not know how as yet to fight against evils the causes of which they cannot comprehend. We know some truth and much fiction about the rascals in political life—for it is the delight of the rascals who are out to throw a searchlight upon the rascals who are in—but we are ignorant of those knots of men and women who are steadily, silently and unselfishly busy in influencing this group, in educating that neighborhood, in purifying and training public opinion so that next week, or next year, or in the next decade, it will demand and will enforce reform. To-day such a group of reformers is ten "cranks" against a thousand conservative citizens; some day in the certain future, however, it will be a thousand citizens against ten reactionaries; and that particular moral or social



battle will have been won. Meanwhile that first ten will have broken into units with new points of attachment and with new—still silent—ways of progressing towards some higher vantage ground of morality and truth.

The modern conscience being straightforward and business-like, we are eschewing casuistry; social service being the plain doing of the next thing to be done, we are growing ashamed of pretense and artificiality. We are resolving life, therefore, into its elements and are finding the highest civilization to be synonymous with the purest simplicity. The shut-in, conventional, censorious, morally dyspeptic existence of earlier America is being transformed into the out-door living, toleration, friendliness and genuine democracy of to-day. But our consciences still demand much training, our working-together still requires to be educated out of the benumbing influences of long generations of isolation, the rank and file of us must still be taught by experience the true meaning and practice of simplicity. Above all, we Americans, and especially we New Englanders, need to learn how to relax.

A real art is that of relaxation. One to be regarded soberly, studied earnestly, and taught as a part of youthful education. Most men are as ignorant of the laws of pleasure as they are of those of health, and weary themselves with sham joys that, secretly, they loathe. Thence arises, in no small measure, that artificiality, insincerity, and vulgar pretense which obtrude themselves alike at the magnificent "function" and at the humble "socia-



ble." So-called Society, whether it be of the city or of the hamlet, is too self-conscious to relax; but its votaries must have some relief, and upon them nature revenges herself by leading them into the wildest excesses and most extravagant inanities.

The inability of the average American to extract even a portion of its normal, rational pleasure from his life befogs the judgment of the visiting foreigner and blinds him to what is superlatively good in this work-ridden, life-wasting United States. It seems to him that the huddled villas of Newport and the crowding booths of Coney Island must completely measure our civilization. He sees everywhere among us so much beauty and so little real pleasure in the beautiful, so much spending and so little true value gained, so much boasting of freedom and such slavery to false and ridiculous conventions. But the traveler who, noting these surface deficiencies, calls us savages, is wholly wrong. We possess all the elements of refinement excepting only that one which has been our leading boast,—simplicity. In escaping from the old New England conscience we have for a time run away from the fundamental principles of social duty; in entering into the liberty of genuine civilization we have become entangled temporarily in the meshes of cosmopolitan license. It is wholesome, therefore, occasionally to go back and to seek, by study of men and events, the deep-lying moral causes of the unquestioned power and leadership of this small Northeastern corner of the United States.

The essential power of New England, and of

New Englanders, has always been the force of rugged simplicity. The men who won the Revolutionary War, the men who saved the Union, were above all simple men, doing their work in a straightforward way. The spiritual and literary leaders of New England, no less, were men and women of direct speech and unartificial living.

The new New England Conscience, if it is to do great deeds, must meet the complex problems of the twentieth with the single-heartedness of the eighteenth century; must choose as its leaders, such direct, straightforward men as those who won the Revolutionary War and who saved the Union to which that War gave birth. Therefore it seems worth while to take up, even though in a desultory way, a few of the events, and to examine a few of the men in which and in whom the New England spirit and the New England conscience seem to have played a leading and compelling part. Behind the New England spirit is, however, the eternal spirit due to the feminine principle; and, if it seems a long way from New England to Versailles, the space is only that of geography. Temperamentally and in matters of conscience, Mme. de Maintenon was conspicuously of the New England type.

II

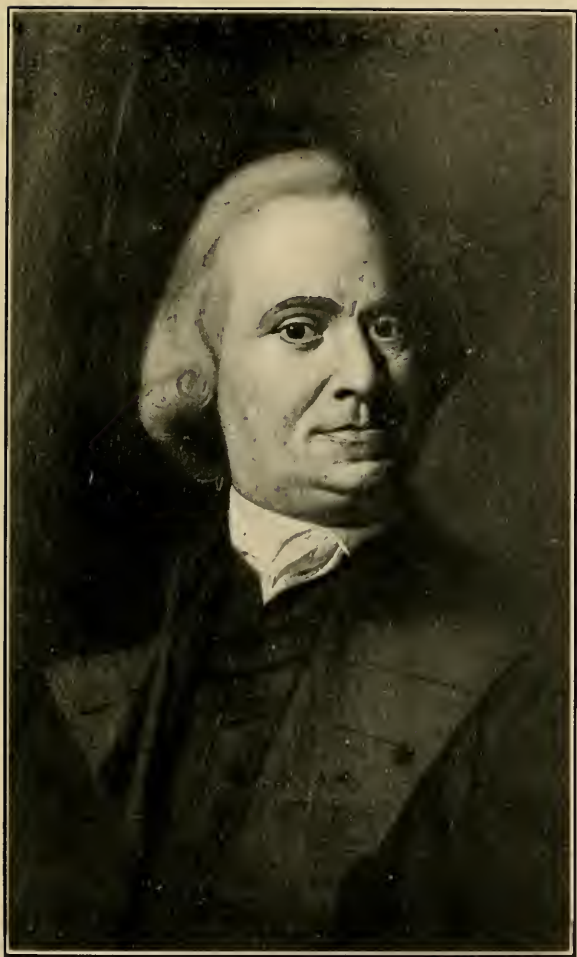
SAMUEL ADAMS: THE NEW ENGLAND DEMOCRAT

**W**E very properly call Washington the Father of his Country; but the real Founder of these United States was not Washington—it was Samuel Adams. It is doubtful if we could have won in the Revolutionary War without the lofty courage and wise generalship of Washington; it is doubtful if the United States could have weathered the still harder period following the Revolution had it not been for the strength and wisdom of the first President. But it is also doubtful if we would have had a Revolutionary War at all—and therefore a field for Washington's great qualities—had it not been for the tireless efforts and the extraordinary skill and power of Samuel Adams, who, John Fiske says, should stand second only to Washington as the greatest of Americans. Boston led the movement against the arbitrary rule of Great Britain; but it was Sam Adams who led Boston. Boston stirred up Massachusetts and the other colonies to resist taxation; but it was Sam Adams who stirred up Boston. And he did this not by eloquence and fiery speech-making—for he was no orator; he stirred up Boston, he stirred up Massachusetts, he stirred up all the colonies by letters to the newspapers, by correspondence, voluminous and fiery, most of all by resolutions passed

in that greatest political institution which America ever possessed or ever will possess,—the New England town-meeting.

It is superfluous to describe the principles and methods of the town-meeting; but perhaps we do not always remember what a perfect instrument for the teaching and preservation of democracy that town-meeting has been and still is, and how much the city youth and man loses in not having an opportunity to watch the machinery of government, to debate public questions and to interrogate, face to face, the officials under whose rule he lives. I have no hesitation in saying that the moulders of America have been, not its Presidents, Governors and other great dignitaries, but those humble though powerful officials called Moderators, who are sworn to show no favor in conducting the town-meeting, and who must let the meanest and poorest citizen express his views as freely and lengthily as he chooses, provided only he keeps within hailing distance of the question before the house.

One hundred and fifty years ago, however, the towns in Massachusetts were even more democratic than they are today; for the people of that time not only settled, in their town-meetings, such questions as they do at present; they also decided who should be the minister and how much (or, rather, how little) salary he should be paid. As a consequence, the citizens grew into the habit of discussing all kinds of questions about church government, morals, and religion, and were accustomed, therefore, to look at every civic and political problem from its eth-



SAMUEL ADAMS



ical as well as from its material side. But there was still another function exercised by those old town-meetings which has long since passed into oblivion,—that of taking direct part in the work of the General Court. For in those earlier days the legislature was regarded by the towns of Massachusetts simply as a sort of joint town-meeting, and the representatives sent to the General Court were instructed, by formal resolutions of the town, how they should vote on all important questions.

These facts are essential to an understanding of the action of the colonies in the ten or twelve years before the Battle of Lexington: the facts that the people at that time had been educated by one hundred and twenty-five years of town-meetings to manage their own affairs through the most perfect form of democratic government ever devised; that those colonial meetings were practically free from all supervision by the British government; that those town gatherings considered not only the affairs of daily life, but also great moral questions; and that they took an active part in the business of the whole commonwealth by instructing their representatives to the General Court how to vote upon every large measure affecting the whole colony.

I have said that the towns of Massachusetts were perfect democracies; but I should have excepted Boston. There was a world of difference between the town governments of Massachusetts and the superimposed colonial rule; and Boston, as the seat of his Majesty's government for Massachusetts, was filled with crown officers, with military men, with

rich merchants having intimate relations with the mother-country, and with younger sons of the nobility sent over here to make a living. So in Boston there was a large and very powerful aristocracy wholly in sympathy with British rule; and the contest there in the eleven years, 1764 to 1775, was not only one between the colonists and the mother-country, but a contest between Democracy as represented by the Town Meeting, and Aristocracy as represented by most of the wealthy merchants and conspicuous officials.

The Boston of that day did not rest mainly upon piles; it was a narrow, but solid, peninsula extending into the harbor, and it possessed no houses higher than three stories. Therefore the few public buildings, such as Faneuil Hall, the Old State House and the Old South Meeting House, loomed up as prominent objects visible from everywhere. Metaphorically, too, those three buildings stand forth as great landmarks in American history, for in one or the other of them took place almost all the famous scenes of the opening of the Revolutionary War.

In one end of the Old State House met the Provincial Assembly, or General Court, and at the other end met the Governor and his Council; in Faneuil Hall assembled the ordinary town-meetings of Boston; but when there was any particularly exciting meeting—and there were many in those ten years before 1775—Faneuil Hall was not big enough; so they would adjourn to the Old South Meeting House, and the thousands of overwrought towns-



people would come sweeping up through what are now Adams Square and Washington Street, and would surge into that building, until every corner upon the floor and in the galleries was filled.

In this old town where everybody knew everybody else, and in those lively old town-meetings where everybody felt free to speak his mind, Samuel Adams played his great part as the stirrer-up and leader of the Revolution.

Samuel Adams was not born a poor boy, though he was always a poor man. His father was one of the leading citizens of Boston, and his grandfather was brother to the grandfather of John Adams. Samuel was born in 1722 in a good house on Purchase Street, with a beautiful garden stretching down to the harbor, and having a fine view of Massachusetts Bay. The boy went to Harvard, was graduated when he was eighteen, and wanted to study law; but law not being considered a very respectable occupation in those days, his parents forbade it and tried to turn a man who would have been a wonderfully good advocate into what proved to be a very unsuccessful merchant. The young man had no taste for this, kept losing money and losing more money until, finally, with the little that was left, he and his father set up a malt house in their garden on Purchase Street. This was fairly successful for a while; but this was not considered very respectable either; and in later years Adams' enemies took great pleasure in calling him "Sam the Maltster."

Probably the main reason why the Adamses—

father and son—did not succeed better in a material way was because they were far more interested in town affairs than in their own concerns. We find Samuel Adams serving on many town committees and as moderator of town-meetings for a number of years; but, singularly enough, he did not become really prominent until he was forty-two. In those days a man of that age was considered venerable, and Adams, moreover, carried out that view, for his hair was quite grey and he had a trembling of the head and hands which, while it added impressiveness to his public speaking, made him seem much older than he was. He had been contributing letters to the newspapers for a number of years—the kind of letter signed *Veritas*, *Senex*, etc., which made up the greater substance of those pre-Revolutionary journals—but his first writing of consequence was a document prepared for a town-meeting, a document which was adopted, protesting against the proposed Stamp Act. This paper is important in being the first formal statement ever made by the Colonies that Parliament had no right to tax them, and in containing the very first suggestion that the Colonies get together to secure redress.

In the fall of that year, 1764, he was elected a member of the Provincial Assembly or General Court, and almost immediately he—together with James Otis—became the leader in those stirring times. In the following May (1765) Adams was re-elected to the General Court, the other three members from Boston being Thomas Cushing (long-time Speaker of the House), John Hancock and

James Otis. At this session Adams was elected Clerk of the House, and the annual salary of one hundred pounds was about all that he and his family had to live on for a number of years.

Meanwhile the Stamp Act had been repealed; but the British government, pretending to believe that it was the kind of tax, not the fact of being taxed, that the colonies objected to, proposed to put other taxes upon paper, glass, painters' colors and tea. Worse than that, however, they proposed to use the money from these taxes for giving regular salaries to the governors, judges, and other officers appointed by the King, who, theretofore, had been dependent upon the votes of the Provincial Assemblies. This the colonies did not like at all, and every manner of wild suggestion was advanced. A sensible plan of resistance, however, and one that met with popular favor, was made by Samuel Adams that the colonies should stop importing English goods and should establish manufactures of their own. At his suggestion town-meetings were held throughout Massachusetts to arouse the people against using British goods and to encourage the starting of domestic industries.

The Massachusetts Assembly prepared various documents, most of which Sam Adams wrote, in relation to these taxes. Among them was a petition to the King; and when Mr. Adams had finished writing it, his daughter said, "In a few weeks that paper will be touched by the royal hand." "More likely," replied her father, "it will be spurned by the royal foot." The document which made the

most stir, however, was a so-called "Circular Letter" sent by the Massachusetts Assembly to the other colonies, urging them to work together to devise some means of making the mother country listen to their complaints and grievances. This Circular Letter so angered the King and his ministers that they ordered Governor Bernard to dissolve the General Court and not to let it meet again until it should agree to withdraw the obnoxious letter. Not only did the General Court, before dissolving, vote not to withdraw the letter, but town meetings were everywhere held upholding the members and making very vigorous protest against taxation without representation. The King's government, therefore, determined to break the spirit of the colonies by forbidding town-meetings, by having such leaders as Adams and Otis arrested, and by sending troops to overawe the people. When the mother country took such violent action as this, Adams foresaw that reconciliation would be impossible, and from that moment, he afterwards said, he began to work night and day for the absolute independence of America.

Since the General Court would not rescind the Circular Letter, since it could not meet again until it did, and since it was important for the towns to confer, the Boston Town Meeting, at Adams' suggestion, got around the difficulty by calling a conference, in Boston, of town representatives. To this invitation ninety-six towns responded; and while they did not accomplish much, they found out how easy it was to get together; and the time was rapidly approaching when they would need to act in

unity. For on the very day (in October, 1768) that this convention adjourned, two regiments (the 14th and 29th) arrived in Boston for the purpose of frightening the rebellious inhabitants into good behavior.

The year 1769 was devoted by most of the people of Boston to abusing equally the importers of English goods and these imported English soldiers. Both were hooted at and called all manner of evil names continually, and the town government and the Governor were in a ceaseless quarrel over quarters for the troops. The town said that the soldiers should be kept down at the Castle (where Fort Independence now stands), but the Governor declared that for the protection of himself and the other Crown officers they should be kept on duty in the very midst of the town; so the streets and the Common resounded with drums and marching, and the main guard was posted on King (now State) Street, with guns pointed at the Assembly chamber. Considering the way they were abused by the tongues of the townspeople, the soldiers behaved pretty well; and, of course, the longer they refrained from using force, the more abusive the populace became. Therefore it is a matter for wonder that not until they had been in Boston a year and a half did a real clash between the "lobster backs" and the citizens take place. That clash, needless to say, was the Boston Massacre, in which three citizens were killed and one mortally wounded.

That affray took place in the evening. Early next morning the citizens, wild with indignation,

assembled at Faneuil Hall in town meeting and appointed a committee of fifteen, with Hancock as chairman, to interview the Governor and tell him that the regiments must be sent away. The meeting then adjourned till three o'clock in the afternoon, while the committee should wait upon Governor Hutchinson. He told them, as he had repeatedly said before, that he had no power to order the removal of the troops. The committee was so determined, however, and the crowds in the streets were so threatening, that Hutchinson at last agreed to remove the 29th regiment, which had been concerned in the Massacre, to the Castle in the harbor. He absolutely refused, however, to order away the 14th.

Meanwhile the town-meeting had again assembled, and the people, pouring in from the surrounding towns at the news of the Massacre, had so swelled the numbers that Faneuil Hall would not hold half the crowd. So the meeting was adjourned to the Old South Meeting House. Imagine the streets between that building and Faneuil Hall filled with a tremendously excited crowd and hear the cry: "Make way for the Committee of Fifteen," as that committee, with Hancock and Adams at their head, emerge from the Old State House, with the Governor's answer, and squeeze their way towards the waiting town-meeting. As the Committee pass through the human lane which is made for them, Adams leans from one side to the other repeating, in a stage whisper, "Both regiments or none," "Both regiments or none." Arrived at the



Old South, the report is made that the Governor will remove the 29th but will not remove the 14th regiment. Then the people, understanding what Adams meant, give a great shout: "Both regiments or none;" and the meeting votes tumultuously that a committee of seven should go back to the Governor with this ultimatum of the Town. Day had begun to wane and in the dim firelight of the Council Chamber sat the Governor and his advisers, together with Colonel Dalrymple, the commander of the troops, waiting for the people's message, and in the high, gloomy church sat the people, waiting for the Governor's reply.

It was a great moment in Samuel Adams' life when he strode into the Council Chamber ready to tell Governor Hutchinson that the will of the people must over-ride the orders of the King. You know that picture of him in Faneuil Hall,—that picture painted by Copley, which represents Adams at this moment standing with his head thrown back, determination on every line of his face, his right hand crushing a roll of manuscript and his left hand outstretched, pointing to the Massachusetts Charter. And these are some of the words that he boldly said, knowing that every word meant rebellion, and rebellion, hanging:

"If you, or Colonel Dalrymple under you, have the power to remove one regiment, you have the power to remove both; and nothing short of their total removal will satisfy the people or preserve the peace of the Province. A multitude highly incensed now wait the result of this application. The voice

of ten thousand freemen demands that both regiments be forthwith removed. Their voice must be respected, their demand obeyed. Fail not then at your peril to comply with this requisition. On you alone rests the responsibility of this decision; and if the just expectations of the people are disappointed, you must be answerable to God and your country for the fatal consequences that must ensue."

A long discussion followed; and finally Hutchinson, urged by his counsellors and even by Dalrymple, gave in, and the message was brought back to the waiting people that democracy had won. Within a week both regiments were removed to the Castle; and always afterwards they were called the "Sam Adams Regiments."

Adams and Democracy had for the moment triumphed, but the next two years were years of reaction. Times grew hard and harder, New York, which had agreed to the non-importation of British goods, went back on this agreement and so broke the force of the whole plan, the King's government grew more and more determined, the Whigs of Boston more and more discouraged, and the Tories, consequently, more and more confident. In this crisis Adams saw that the only way to strengthen the cause of independence would be to bring the force of all the Massachusetts town-meetings to bear upon the somewhat wavering policies of the Boston Town Meeting. Therefore, in the fall of 1772, he moved, in the Boston meeting, that "A committee of Correspondence be appointed, to consist of twenty-one persons, to state the rights of the colonists.



and of this Province in particular, as men and Christians and as subjects; and to communicate and publish the same to the several towns and to the world," etc. Most of his friends thought this plan rather absurd and many of them refused to serve on the Committee; but the response which came from the towns soon showed Adams to have been right. These Committees, we now know, were the very mainsprings of the Federal Union. It is inspiring to read the bold words which came in to the Boston meeting, during the winter of 1772-1773 from these towns. Said the people of Roxbury: "Our pious fathers died with the pleasing hope that we, their children, should live free. Let none, as they will answer it another day, disturb the ashes of those heroes by selling their birthright." Ipswich advised that the "inhabitants should stand firm as one man to support and maintain all their just rights and privileges." Salisbury, Beverly, Lynn, Danvers and Rowley declared for an American Union; and in Plymouth the vote showed that there were ninety to one ready, if need be, to fight Great Britain.

This action of Massachusetts spread to the other colonies, and in 1773 Virginia proposed that there be Committees of Correspondence between all the colonies. Later we shall see how Massachusetts responded to this suggestion; but meanwhile occurred an event that brought the colonies still closer together in their opposition to increasing tyranny. As a result of the non-importation agreements, the new taxes had yielded practically no revenue to the

Crown; therefore they were now all taken off excepting the tax on tea, which was left in order to show that the King reserved the right to tax. It is needless to go into the long controversy over this new taxation question, or to rehearse the self-sacrifice of the American women in giving up their favorite beverage, drinking catnip tea instead. It is well known how the shiploads of the proscribed herb were consigned to certain agents here, how those agents refused to resign, how the Boston Town Meeting tried to induce Hutchinson to send the tea back, and how he would not. After the arrival of the first tea-ship, the *Dartmouth*, on November 17, 1773, town-meetings were held almost daily,—most of them in the Old South Meeting-house,—resolutions that the tea never should be landed were passed, the ship was constantly guarded by armed citizens, and mounted couriers stood ready to alarm the country should the tea be brought on shore. At last came the day when, by law, the tea must be landed by the customs officers. The owners were ready to send the cargoes back; but the customs officers would not give them permission, and two armed vessels were stationed in the channel with orders to sink the ships should they try to leave without their clearance papers. This was the 16th of December. Couriers had gone all over the province with the news; people from the whole eastern part of Massachusetts had poured in to see what was going to happen; and a town-meeting duly called was attended by seven thousand persons who filled the Old South Meeting-house and spread

through the surrounding streets. This assemblage gave the owner of the tea-vessel one more chance; so, in obedience to its orders, the much-abused man traveled way out to Hutchinson's country house on Milton Hill to beg once again for a permit to send his cargo back. Meanwhile the great crowd sat till long after dark, with Sam Adams as moderator, debating and discussing. Evidently something was going to happen; but only the few in the secret knew just what. After a long time poor old Mr. Rotch came back from Milton and reported that the Governor had again refused him a permit. Immediately Mr. Adams arose and in a loud and solemn voice said: "This meeting can do nothing more to save the country." That was the prearranged signal. Instantly a loud war-whoop was heard and forty or fifty men disguised as Indians rushed by the door, down Milk and Purchase Streets to Griffin's Wharf off which the tea ships were moored. The crowd rushed after them and such a tumult and howling quiet Boston had not heard for many a day. The imitation Indians were quiet enough, however, when they got on board the ship, and in a short time they had hoisted every chest of tea, broken it open and dumped the contents into the sea. This last desperate measure had been planned under the direction of Adams in a printing office on Court Street which was long a favorite meeting-place of the patriot leaders.

The King's answer to the Boston Tea Party was the Boston Port Bill. The English ministry thought this a very shrewd move; for, by closing the port of

Boston to all entering and outgoing ships, the occupation of most of the people would be gone, and it was hoped that they would be starved into submission. Furthermore, by diverting trade from Boston, other towns and colonies would benefit and would make so much profit that, it was thought, they would be quite willing to desert rebellious Boston. But in this they were completely mistaken. Although, to get back her trade, all the Boston Town Meeting had to do was to vote payment for the destroyed tea, they would not pass such a vote; the towns which might have profited by Boston's misfortune refused to do so; money, provisions, and votes of praise and encouragement came in from all over the colonies; and the demand for a congress of all the colonies grew louder and louder.

In the interval, the Governor, practically powerless against the obstinacy of the Boston Town Meeting, had asked for leave of absence and had gone over to England, General Gage being appointed Governor in his place. As Boston was in disgrace, Gage forbade the General Court to meet there and ordered it to Salem, where it convened in June, 1774. Its chief business was to appoint delegates to the proposed Continental Congress at Philadelphia; but this was kept a profound secret; for, had it been known, Gage would have dissolved the Assembly before it had a chance to carry out this plan. Sam Adams, however, was equal to the emergency. Keeping the General Court busy with matters of not much consequence, and having it debate resolutions which looked as if Massachusetts were getting ready

to yield to the King, he lulled suspicion to sleep and meanwhile went about among the members, secretly pledging them to support him in what he proposed to do. At first he could be sure of only five members; but by the 17th of June (just a year before the Battle of Bunker Hill) he was certain of a majority. So, as head of a committee on the state of the Province, he suddenly brought in a resolve that five men whom he named should be appointed delegates to a colonial congress to be held at Philadelphia. The Tory members tried to choke off the measure and break up the session by leaving the hall; but Adams had had the doors locked and had pocketed the key. One member, however, did escape and carried the news of what was going on to Gage, who immediately sent his personal agent to dissolve the Assembly. But the Assembly refused to let the Governor's messenger in until they had passed a vote appointing the delegates, appropriated money for their expenses and adopted various other measures against the government.

We have no time to take up the extraordinary history of those Continental Congresses which finally produced the Declaration of Independence, and in which Samuel and John Adams and John Hancock played so conspicuous a part. But I would speak of still two more town meetings which took place in the Old South Meeting house. The first was in June, 1774. Boston's trade was dead, her ships and wharves were rotting, grass was growing in her streets, men who had been rich were living on the charity of other towns, obstinacy seemed to

have resulted in nothing, and a simple confession that the Tea Party had been wrong would restore her trade and industry. The Tories, therefore, thought this the right time to call a town meeting at which to dissolve the Committee of Correspondence and to beg forgiveness of the mother country. Thousands came to the meeting—they had nothing else to do;—gloom was on every face, fear of the future in every heart, continued resistance meant starvation and ruin; but Samuel Adams, leaving the chair as Moderator, led the debate for hours, and when the vote was finally taken, the townspeople, by a great majority, declared themselves determined to continue to resist. Moreover, they entered into a “solemn league and covenant” to use no British goods whatever until their wrongs should be righted. That was the crucial moment in Sam Adams’ long fight for the independence of the colonies; that vote of the Boston Town Meeting meant ultimate war.

The second meeting was, like the first, illegal—for town meetings had been long ago forbidden—and was held on the 6th of March (the 5th being Sunday), 1775, the fifth anniversary of the Boston Massacre. The town was then wholly in the hands of soldiery—there being eleven regiments stationed there—a price was on the heads of Adams, Hancock, Otis, Warren and the other patriot leaders, any clash between the military and the people meant riot, massacre and the hanging of those patriot leaders:—yet on the Old South platform, behind a desk draped in mourning, calmly sat, as

Moderator of the meeting, Samuel Adams; and packed into every available inch of the room sat and stood the people, waiting for Joseph Warren, the orator, to appear. Scattered through the audience, to intimidate it, were many soldiers in uniform and armed. Observing them, Adams asked the townspeople to vacate the front rows and invited the soldiers to occupy those pews so that they might the better hear what Dr. Warren was about to say. A full hour beyond the appointed time that tense audience awaited Warren; and then he came in, not through the door, but through a window behind the pulpit, the crowd being so dense that he could find no other ingress. Warren was as eloquent as he was fearless, and every word he spoke was an invitation to the soldiers to cry treason and arrest him and the applauding audience. Indeed, one officer sitting on the pulpit stairs, held up his open palm filled with bullets where all the audience could see. Warren, without a moment's hesitation, dropped his handkerchief over the bullets and went steadily on. What a scene that was; and how that and like scenes of this great time have made that old South Meeting-House a sacred place forever!

I have spoken thus far mainly of Boston, for that was the headquarters of rebellion; but, each in its own way, every other town in Massachusetts was equally active. Take my own town of Lexington, for example. It had but seven hundred inhabitants, almost all of them plain farmers, many of them scarcely able to read or to write their names; but



they knew history, they understood politics, they had been educated by a century of town meetings to know their rights and to speak their minds. There was not an act of the Boston Town Meeting or of the General Court which they had not eagerly followed; there had been no crisis in the affairs of the colony which had not had its Lexington town-meeting to discuss the matter and to instruct the town's representative. And that action was guided, those instructions were written by one of the greatest patriots and keenest minds of that time of great men,—Parson Jonas Clarke, who for fifty years was minister of Lexington and whose sermons were trumpet calls to stand fast in the cause of Liberty. Never was there a better school for patriots and a better teacher of the true principles of liberty than were those town meetings of Lexington, and that leader in those meetings,—Parson Clarke.

It was no mere coincidence, therefore, that brought Hancock and Sam Adams into Lexington on the 18th of April, 1775, and found them at the house of Parson Clarke on the very night that Gage had fixed upon to strike the first blow against the patriot cause. Hancock and Adams both had a high price on their heads; the very shadow of the gallows was over them; but they were serenely journeying to the second Continental Congress, sure that the people would protect them from all injury. And the inhabitants of Lexington were doing their part that night; for around Parson Clarke's house they had placed a guard of eight minute-men to keep careful watch. About mid-



night up came Paul Revere clattering and shouting; there was hurried conference between Revere, Hancock and Adams; and while the latter wanted to shoulder muskets and take part in the coming fight, they were persuaded that their lives were too precious to be put in danger. Sergeant Munroe escorted them by back roads to a place of safety in Woburn, and got back to Lexington Green in time to line up the minute-men. As Adams started out across the hills in the first gray of the dawn, he is said to have exclaimed: "What a glorious morning for America." It was indeed a glorious morning, and it meant the crowning of Samuel Adams' enormous labors during those eleven terrible years. From one point to another he had led the town meetings until from humble petitioning they had gone on to proud defiance of the King and at last had arrived at the place where they were ready to take up arms and to surrender their lives in defence of liberty.

Samuel Adams remained a conspicuous figure until his death in 1803. He took a leading part in all the congresses of the Revolution and signed the Declaration of Independence. Moreover it was he who prepared the articles of confederation. But from the opening of the Revolutionary War his influence and reputation seemed slowly to decline, so that not until comparatively recent years has his name begun to emerge from the sort of eclipse in which it rested behind those of such men as Washington, John Adams and Jefferson. Why was this? Mainly, I think, because Samuel Adams had the

abilities of a revolutionary rather than of a constructive statesman. He quite strenuously opposed, for example, the acceptance of the Constitution by the Massachusetts Convention, and only reluctantly agreed to its adoption when he perceived that further opposition would be vain. He was a Republican, moreover, in a State which at that time was overwhelmingly Federalist; yet, curiously enough, while the other Republicans had followed the free-thinking of Jefferson and Paine, he continued a staunch supporter of the strictest Calvinism. His absorption in politics, furthermore, had made him wholly neglectful of such lesser matters as the support of his family, and had induced a carelessness in money affairs which had laid him open to charges, unquestionably unfounded, of having, as tax-collector, misappropriated funds. Finally his long years of fighting against British tyranny had made him, to use a good Yankee word, "cantankerous," and militated against his making those concessions to the views and opinions of others so essential in the building of a state. His election, therefore, in 1794, after he had served some years as Lieutenant Governor, to the governorship of Massachusetts, was in the nature of a reward somewhat perfunctorily given, in recognition of his earlier services, rather than a spontaneous choice of the people. An appreciation of this fact, as well as the increasing infirmities of his seventy-five years, led him, therefore, in 1797, to decline a renomination. He passed the remaining six or seven years of his life sitting in his modest house or his pleasant garden in Winter Street exchanging

reminiscences with his contemporaries, fast thinning in number, or receiving the respectful homage of the younger generation.

On the domestic side, the burden, ever since their early marriage, had been mainly carried by his excellent and devoted wife (who, by her extraordinary thrift, made up in some measure for his lack of it,) and by his many friends who had to go so far, sometimes, as to fit him out with such clothes and sums of money as he must have to make a decent appearance as a public man. His only son, Samuel, was graduated at Harvard in 1771, studied medicine with Dr. Joseph Warren, served as a surgeon throughout the Revolution, but received, in that service, such damage to his constitution that he died in 1788. The money received from the government as compensation for the services of this son was the sole support of Mr. Adams during his final years. It is interesting in this connection to remember that the very large sums left in charity, a few years ago, by Dr. John and Miss Belinda Randall, were derived almost wholly from the increment of that Adams property (they being grand-children of Samuel Adams through his daughter) on Winter, Washington and other down-town streets, which was of no contributory support to their illustrious grandfather.

Another descendant, Mr. William V. Wells, published some years ago a biography of his ancestor which fills three volumes, and which, it seems to me, tries to claim too much for Samuel Adams. He was a great figure,—seemingly an in-

dispensable figure—during the decade preceding the Battle of Lexington; but his greatest work for his country ended on that April morning when he stood on the hills of Lexington and uttered (or might have uttered) that prophetic phrase. The Massachusetts Town Meeting had done its noble work; and Samuel Adams, the man of the town meeting, the man who never faltered, never lost courage, never failed in resourcefulness, who would neither accept bribes nor heed threats, the “Great Incendiary,” as Hutchinson called him, in whose hands (as Hutchinson also declared) all the other men were but puppets,—that man up to that day had been the guiding spirit of it all. His cousin, John Adams, once enthusiastically called him “the wedge of steel which split the knot of *lignum vitæ* that tied America to England.” That is a true description of the part he played; and the force he used was the enormous democratic power of the New England Town Meeting. Those meetings were the main strength of the colonies, it was they which brought these colonies together in a splendid union, it was they that held the States together through the terrible crisis of the Civil War, and we cannot have real democracy in our huge modern cities until we find some way of getting at the people themselves as Sam Adams reached them face to face in the town meetings of the Old South Meeting House and Faneuil Hall.

## III

## THE TOWN OF LEXINGTON\*

**H**ISTORIANS, now careful dissectors of the body politic, were once mere brilliant painters of its outward show. Historical writers of the last century dealt only with wars and kings, with triumphs and catastrophes, heedless of the great body of the people through whom civilization really grows. Such a king reigned and died, such wars he waged, such alliances he made,—that was the substance of a chronicle as brilliant as it was superficial. Births of everyday reformers, deaths of commonplace martyrs, wars of classes and of trade, holy alliances of virtue and suffering, devil's alliances of greed and hatred,—these, the real events of history, had no place in this gazette of royalty. The progress of nations was, for those old-time chroniclers, a kind of lordly game in which none but the honor cards had value. That this surface-life of the court and battle-field was founded upon a steadily advancing under-life of the people, that these kingly happenings were but the effects of profounder social and industrial causes, are facts of quite recent recognition.

It is true that in its nearly three hundred years

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\*Address at the Celebration of the 200th Anniversary of the Incorporation of Lexington, June 8, 1913.

of history, what is now the United States of America has had two great wars,—wars that in their results were among the most momentous in all history; but those conflicts were merely the outcropping, so to speak, of vaster and deeper forces, to which war was but incidental. For the significant history of America has been one not of kings, but of families; not of courts, but of communities; not of bloody conquests of enemies, but of a splendid mastery of nature and of self.

It was mainly for the sake of their wives and children that the Pilgrims adventured to the inhospitable shores of Massachusetts; it was the desire to establish a community life ordered as they believed it should be that brought the Puritans to Salem and to Boston; it was not single rovers, it was settlers with their families who pushed their brave way to Ohio, to the Mississippi, and across prairie and mountain to the far North-West.

Social stability, industry, faith, love of freedom,—these were the corner-stones of every lasting structure which our forefathers upreared. The greedy Spaniard, murderously seeking treasure, the thrifty Frenchman, exploiting the fur-trade, the roystering Gentlemen Adventurers, imagining the sand-heaps of Virginia to be fields of gold, either had no families or had cut themselves adrift to court fortune in the unknown West. But on the “*Mayflower*,” household goods and distaffs filled the spaces which, in the ships of earlier voyagers, had been given to weapons and munitions of war. The Plymouth Company came for peace, for quietude, for escape

from a tyrannical government. With them their womenkind were first, for upon their wives and daughters the weight of persecution fell most heavily. And most of those who followed the Pilgrims, whether to New England, to Virginia, or to New Amsterdam, had in view that permanent settlement which means the bringing up of a family and the establishing of a stable, sober and industrious community. These conditions of true colonization were especially conspicuous, however, in Massachusetts Bay, the settlers wherein, mindful of the supreme importance of right training in youth, opened a Latin School five years after they landed, founded Harvard College only three years later, and enacted a general school-law (the first in the world) in 1647.

Of the preëminently staid and enlightened community of which Harvard College was the early-established centre, Lexington was, so to speak, the third child, the earlier offspring, set apart from the original Cambridge of 1644, having been Billerica far to the north, and Newton to the west and south.

With the exception of that one "Glorious morning," when seventy plain farmers stood and died like heroes, the outward history of Lexington has been quiet, uneventful, even humdrum. To attempt to make of it a dramatic narrative would be absurd. To cite it, however, as a superlative example of forces which made America great in the past and which should make her greater in the future, is perhaps worth while.

Six generations have passed since March 31,



1713 (N.S.), when the "Inhabitants or farmers dwelling on a certain Tract of Out Lands within the Township of Cambridge in the County of Middlesex liuing remote from the Body of the Town towards Concord. . . . being now increased . . . obtained Consent of the Town & made Application . . . to be made a Separate & distinct Town, upon such Terms as they & the Town of Cambridge have agreed upon;" and since the General Court of Massachusetts "ORDERED that the aforesaid Tract of Land known by the Name of the Northern Precinct in Cambridge be henceforth made a separate & distinct Town by the Name of LEXINGTON . . . & that the Inhabitants of the said Town of Lexington be entitled to Have, Use, Exercise & Enjoy all such Immunities Powers & Privileges as other Towns of this Province have & do by Law Use Exercise and Enjoy."

In each of these six generations the world has made always longer strides towards that perfect civilization to which mankind aspires. Therefore the two centuries of Lexington's corporate life have been the most fruitful in all human history. Since genuine democracy did not begin until 1688, practically the whole development of mankind out of feudalism is measured by the comparatively short space since Lexington was born.

In the first of those six generations was established the newspaper, perhaps the most far-reaching of the forces of enlightenment; in the second the people of America issued successful from the first



great conflict between privilege and justice; in the third, the face of Europe and the whole current of her affairs were changed by the French Revolution and Napoleon's astonishing career; the fourth generation witnessed first the Reform Bill and then the epoch-making upheavals of 1848; in the fifth the people of the United States were forever welded by a civil conflict theretofore unheard of in its magnitude; while in the sixth there has been such industrial and social transformation as has filled the world of 1913 with problems unknown and inconceivable in 1881.

In these six wonderful periods of democratic advance, this Town played a conspicuous part only in the second, but what she did in that second generation not only profoundly affected the four generations succeeding, but will influence world history to the very end of time. In the every-day life of Lexington, moreover, have been conspicuously exhibited those determining forces which created New England, the Middle West, and the great North-West,—the forces of family integrity, community responsibility, and sober striving towards ever higher standards and ideals.

In 1713, when the Order of the General Court was passed, there were within the territory of Lexington less than five hundred persons. Partly because the Town had been settled by the overflowing of surrounding communities, partly because the area now centering in the Common had been held for many years in the so-called Pelham grant, a larger proportion of those inhabitants lived on the

outskirts than in the neighborhood of the single meeting-house. Therefore, during more than a half-century after its first settlement, the people of Cambridge Farms were compelled to travel from five to ten miles to the meeting-house at Cambridge, and for fully another fifty years after Cambridge had permitted the erection of a meeting-house at the Farms, most of the worshipers were still obliged to journey from one to three miles every Sabbath to attend the services. Yet, because of the strict Puritanism of the day, which frowned upon or actually punished absence from the Sunday meeting, the townspeople,—thus forced to spend at least one day in seven in each other's company—had developed a solidarity and community feeling otherwise difficult, if not impossible, to bring about.

For, however scattered the population, everything in those Puritan days must focus in the village meeting-house. Attendance upon Divine service was made urgent both by public opinion and by fear of future punishment. Moreover, the town-meetings—held, down to 1846, within the sacred building—gave almost as much time to such parish questions as the choice of a minister, his compensation, and his orthodoxy, as to the secular problems of roads and school-houses. Within the meeting-house every child whose parents hoped for its salvation must be baptized, every older citizen who cared for public opinion must have a regular sitting, every sinner might at any moment be summoned for public confession and judgment. While many could not, and many did not, become legal members of the

church body, only those admitted to church fellowship enjoyed full measure of community rights; and ambition for social standing could get its accepted seal only from the church organization, which, by its seating in the meeting-house, fixed for five or ten-year periods the exact degree of dignity of every family.

Furthermore, many personal disputes in the community were settled by the minister, under whose charge also, direct or indirect, was the schooling of the children, and in whose study those who sought a higher education prepared, as a rule, for Harvard or Yale College. Those institutions themselves existed at that time almost solely for the training of the ministry; and in many other ways there was continually emphasized to all the people of a New England community the supremacy not only in spiritual, but also in temporal matters, of the Puritan Church.

That church, however, was not autocratic; it was Congregational, ruled in temporal affairs by the parish (and every early New England town was also a parish or several parishes), and in spiritual matters by those admitted to church fellowship. Each New England town was, therefore, a religious democracy, which, inspired by Biblical example, put conspicuous emphasis upon family life, parental control and community responsibility. Every influence in a Massachusetts town during the eighteenth, and far into the nineteenth, century tended to magnify the responsibility of the male head of a family to rear his children in godliness

and industry, to bring them early into communion with the orthodox faith, and to inspire them with a feeling of personal obligation towards the place in which they lived.

Second only to the meeting-house as an educator in family and community responsibility, was the town-meeting, which, because it dealt with church affairs, and in most instances was held in the meeting-house, partook not a little of the sacredness of the actual Sabbath service. The New England town-meeting was, and is, the most democratic parliament in the world. The moderator has, within certain rigid limits, autocratic powers; but so long as those bounds are not crossed, the humblest voter is equal, in freedom of debate and liberty of challenge, as well as in the actual count of votes, to the richest or most highly educated. As soon as a youth is twenty-one he may begin to practice every right, responsibility and duty of citizenship: and long before that day, the average village-bred boy is getting an admirable education in social responsibility by listening to the often tedious, often irrelevant, but always thoroughly democratic, town-meeting debates.

The very legislative Order which created Lexington commanded the constable to call a town-meeting; and within six days the "Inhabitants duly qualified for Votes" had not only elected numerous town officers, but their selectmen had agreed that they would "build a Pound, . . . erect a Payer of Stocks, and Provide the Town with Waights and measurs." Two weeks later, the citi-

zens, duly assembled, granted "416 Pounds money to the Comittee for Building of the meeting-house."

That second meeting-house (the first having been built in 1692) stood, as did its successor (erected in 1794 and burned in 1846) on the easterly end of the Common. The Common itself had been purchased only two years before the Town's incorporation from "Nibour" Muzzy; so that almost contemporaneously with the erection of Lexington were established the forum for inciting and the theatre for enacting the first battle of the Revolutionary War.

In June of the year following incorporation, the Selectmen "agred that John Muzzy should have thare aprobation to Kep a publique House of Entertainment: and his father did Ingage before the selectmen to a Comadate his son John with stabble roome haye and Pastuering: so fare as he stood In nead: for the Suport of Strangers."

Eleven years earlier, John Muzzy's father, Benjamin, had established the first tavern in Cambridge Farms, on the edge of what he later sold for a Common and close to the meeting-house. If that old Muzzy, or Buckman, Tavern, which the citizens have so generously and wisely acquired, could speak, what a story it could tell: of the strangers coming from New Hampshire and Vermont for entertainment—as it was called—on their last night before reaching Boston; of the detailed town gossip exchanged there over flip and cider betwixt Sabbath services; of the sermons carried across in drowsy summer days from the open windows of the meet-

ing-house, sermons that, as Colonial affairs became more critical, grew more and more to resemble the calls to battle of the old Hebrew prophets; of the long debates in town-meeting over the schools, the roads, the acts of the Great and General Court and the unwarranted usurpations of his Majesty's government; and, finally, of that cool night in April when the alarm of Revere having called the Minute-Men together at two in the morning, the "greater part of them" being dismissed temporarily, "went to Buckman's Tavern," and then, at half-past four, precipitately rushed out again to fall in line,—seventy farmers opposing eight hundred British troops. The old house itself actually took part in the affray, for from its back door, and again from its front door, at least one man aimed at the British, and drew upon the building a return fire, the marks of which remain to-day.

The courageous decision not only to face an overwhelming foe, but also to take the imminent risk of being hanged, was no sudden impulse on the part of those plain citizens of Lexington. They were not hot-headed youth, bred to idleness and eager for a quarrel; they were not mercenaries with whom fighting is a trade; they were not swashbucklers glad to seize any excuse for rioting and bloodshed. They were sober, thinking citizens, for the most part heads of families. Their wives and children were within sound of their muskets; their homes, their lands, their church,—all that they held dear—were witnesses to their boldness in defying the power of Great Britain, a power that could, if the

issue of the conflict went against them, wipe out their township, beggar their families and gibbet them as rebels to their King.

It is true that most of them were accustomed to the bearing of arms. Those were still pioneer days when the use of the musket was a necessary part of education; and many of the Minute-Men had been honorable actors in the long war against the French and Indians. But they were not soldiers in the usual meaning; they were citizen-defenders, driven to the desperate stand they took by a long series of tyrannies, the continuance of which, they foresaw, would be worse than even forfeiture and hanging. Every man of them realized what he was doing, knew why he did it, and stood ready to accept the consequences. This fact, and also the fact that, in the proportion of those killed and wounded to the total force engaged, this was one of the bloodiest of battles, make the fight on Lexington Green a great event in human history.

So far as concerns Massachusetts as a whole, the resistance at Lexington may be said to date from 1646, when the Colony made its first formal protest against the pretensions of the English Parliament; but so far as concerns Lexington itself, the Battle may be declared to have begun with the ordination, in 1698, of the Reverend John Hancock, grandfather of him whose bold signature stands first upon the Declaration. The Reverend John Hancock ministered to the people of Lexington for fifty-five years, a real shepherd to his sheep, one who made them feel in the highest degree their responsi-



bilities to their families and to the community in which they lived. Dying in 1752, "Bishop" Hancock, as he was sometimes called, was succeeded by his grandson-in-law, the Reverend Jonas Clarke, an unfailing fount of inspiration to those who defended human rights at Lexington. From his ordination in 1755, Parson Clarke, both in the pulpit and on the floor of the town-meeting, kept before his people the supreme sacredness of liberty, the right of resistance to oppression, and the solemn duty of transmitting to posterity the privileges of freemen that the fathers had won.

The instructions given to the successive representatives to the General Court, and to other assemblages, by Lexington town-meetings, beginning as early as 1765, and extending practically through the Revolutionary War, were all written by Jonas Clarke, and are models of trenchant English and of cogent reasoning. In remonstrating against the Stamp Act, Parson Clarke said, through the medium of the town-meeting:—

" . . . when we Consider the invaluable Rights and Liberties we now possess, the Firmness and Resolution of our Fathers, for the Support and Preservation of them for us, and how Much we owe to our Selves and to Posterity, we Cannot but look upon it as an unpardonable Neglect, any longer to delay expressing how deeply we are Concerned at Some Measures adopted by the late Ministry." (and) . . . "We earnestly recommend to You (our representatives) the most calm, decent and dispassionate Measures, for an open, Explicit



and resolute assertion and vindication of our *Charter Rights* and Liberties; and that the Same be so entered upon Record, that the World may see, and future Generations Know, that the present both knew and valued the Rights they enjoyed, and did not tamely resign them for Chains and Slavery."

Subsequent instructions, remonstrances and resolves all breathe the same spirit of lofty patriotism; and in due time it was resolved, unanimously, "That if any Head of a Family in this Town, or any Person shall from this time forward; and untill the Duty be taken off; purchase any Tea, or Use, or consume any Tea in their Famelies, such person shall be looked upon as an Enemy to this Town, and to this Country, and shall by this Town be treated with Neglect and Contempt."

The work of Parson Clarke was not limited, however, to these occasional documents. Almost every Sunday, in the ten years preceding the opening of the Revolution, he is said to have urged from the pulpit, in such indirect manner as was consistent with due reverence, the fundamental truths for which he believed the New England Church, as well as the New England Town-Meeting, should unalterably stand. Consequently, the very walls of the meeting-house became saturated with the spirit of resistance to oppression; and the humble farmer folk who listened Sunday after Sunday to their parson's preaching must have come to regard it as beyond question that they should go to any lengths necessary to preserve for their children the heritage of freedom which they and their ancestors

had, by their labor and self-sacrifice, so hardly won. Indeed, as early as December, 1773, in their remonstrance against the taxation of tea, the inhabitants of Lexington declared: "We are ready and resolved to concur with" . . . ("our brethren in Boston, and other Towns") "in every rational Measure, that may be Necessary for the Preservation or Recovery of our Rights and Liberties as Englishmen and Christians; and we trust in GOD That should the State of Our Affairs require it, *We shall be ready to Sacrifice our Estates, and every thing dear in Life, Yea and Life itself, in support of the common Cause.*"

Thus was plainly foreshadowed the beginning of revolt, the only question being that of time and place. Consequently, when it was ordained that the time for armed resistance should be in the spring of 1775, and that the place should be along the march of the British troops from Boston to destroy the military stores at Concord, the little band of Lexington Minute-Men took it as a matter of course that they should interpose their seventy bodies across the pathway of eight hundred troops. They could have had no thought or hope of stopping that expedition; they had no fanatic dream of martyrdom;—they simply were carrying out at the foreordained moment the instructions which they had received, Sunday after Sunday, and in town-meeting after town-meeting, from the voice and pen of their great spiritual leader.

Not even the soul of Jonas Clarke could lead, however, unless there were other great souls ready

to be led. The Minute-Men of Lexington were not of so-called noble or even gentle blood, the rules of chivalry were unknown to them, they were unread in the tales of heroes, whether classic or mediæval. But they and their forebears for nearly two centuries had loved freedom in the abstract, and had known it in the concrete. They had ruled themselves in church and in town-meeting; and they knew that the acts of England, unless resisted, must put an end to that self-government. To stop the British troops was impossible; but to show to the British government that they, the fathers of the hamlet of Lexington, were indeed "ready," as they had many months before declared "to Sacrifice, Yea, Life itself in support of the common Cause," was possible. Two volleys were enough to disperse them; but in thus nonchalantly ending seven lives, Smith and Pitcairn signed the death-warrant of the British army in America, severed from England a territory of enormous area and incalculable value, broke forever the power of the English throne, and, indirectly, sowed the dragon's teeth from which were to spring the devastating legions of Napoleon.

Well may we of Lexington, of Massachusetts, and of all America, preserve this acre of greensward, bought from "Nibour" Muzzy for £16, but made priceless by the blood of those seven Minute-Men. Jonas Parker, father of ten children, the youngest still in her teens, vowed he would never run, and fell on the spot where he first stood, bayoneted in the very act of reloading. Robert Munroe, a standard bearer at Louisburg, a man advanc-

ed in years, died as Ensign, holding again, at least metaphorically, the flag at Lexington. Samuel Hadley, with three small children at home, and John Brown, a youth of twenty-four, were slain after they had obeyed Pitcairn's order and had left the field. John Muzzy, in the prime of life, "was found dead," as John Munroe testified, "near the place where our line was formed;" Caleb Harrington, another youth of twenty-four, was shot while leaving the meeting-house where, before the fight, he and others had gone to remove, if possible, a quantity of powder; and Jonathan Harrington, fighting literally before his own fireside, his wife and child watching him from the window, crawled, mortally bleeding, to his doorstep and died at his wife's feet.

These men,—some veterans, some scarcely more than lads, some with the responsibilities of households, others with the burdens and rewards of life still ahead of them—fought and died, not for money or glory or the love of battle. They fought in defence of the Town-Meeting, that instrument which, in the hands of freemen, is the basis of all efficient government; they fought in defence of the family, that indispensable foundation of real civilization; they fought in defence of the Church, which, whether Catholic or Protestant, whether Episcopal or Congregational, whether your faith or my faith or the faith of those who worship in divers and, to us, strange ways, is the eternal flame that gives to government, to family, and to civilization itself, their essential and enduring worth.

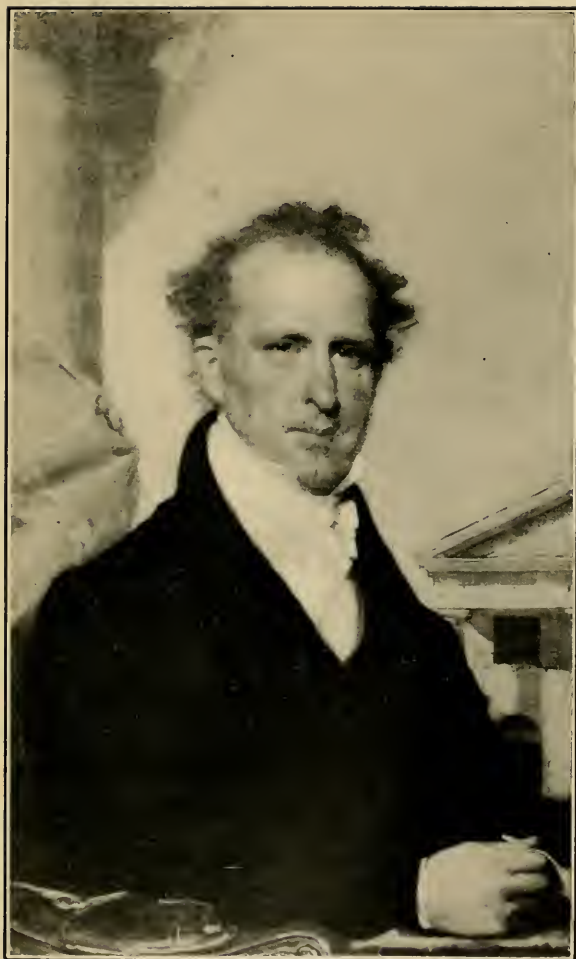
IV

JOSIAH QUINCY, THE NEW ENGLAND ARISTOCRAT

“**I** GIVE to my son, when he shall arrive to the age of fifteen years, Algernon Sydney’s works, John Locke’s works, Lord Bacon’s works, Gordon’s Tacitus, and Cato’s Letters. May the spirit of Liberty rest upon him!” Such was the significant legacy of one of the purest patriots of the Revolution, Josiah Quincy, Jr., to one of the sincerest builders of the Republic, his son, Josiah Quincy, 3rd. And throughout that son’s long life, while a member of Congress and of both Houses of the Legislature, while President of Harvard University, while Mayor of Boston, a lofty independence did indeed rest upon this versatile man. What a period was spanned by the career of that second mayor of historic Boston! His earliest memories were of Gage’s soldiers peering into the carriage windows as his mother and he hastened from beleaguered Boston; the tidings which reached his sinking senses were of the closing of the Union armies upon beleaguered Richmond. Josiah Quincy might have heard the shots at Lexington which began, might have heard the fusillades at Petersburg which completed, the splendid struggle for American liberty. He knew Washington; he knew Lincoln; and there was scarcely an American statesman of the more than two intervening generations whom he had not at least met. Predict-

ing, almost from the adoption of the Constitution, the rise and arrogance of the slave power, he lived to see that power crushed,—and in no small degree by the very states created to maintain it. Vowing himself from early manhood to a public career, he was permitted to fulfill that vow, not in just such wise as he intended, but still with a wide range and broad activities. His life being almost contemporaneous with the infancy and adolescence of the United States, he was conspicuously a mentor of that lusty child and youth; and when, the best-known citizen of Boston, he sank to his final sleep, he had seen that Republic, whose birth-time was his own, just entering, with the close of the Civil War, upon its true, and we pray its infinite, manhood among the great nations of the world.

Singular, then, in its extraordinary length of years and its varied usefulness, Josiah Quincy's career was remarkable, too, in that, though an American publicist, he was not a self-made man. On the contrary, in the sense in which we may use the word, he was an aristocrat; by the modest standards of the last century, he was rich. Moreover, he was liberally educated, he was strikingly handsome, he was graceful and eloquent, and behind him was the influence, through family alliance, of New England's whole power and prestige. In short, every gift which nature and fortune could provide was his. And mainly for that reason his career is of such importance at this time. It is natural, of course, in a democratic country, it is still more natural in a country pushed, by successive



JOSIAH QUINCY





generations of frontiersmen, across three thousand miles of territory, that our great men should so largely have been poor boys, that our leaders in city and state should painfully have climbed from the bottom of the social ladder. And it is still more to be expected that our hero tales and our biographies should magnify those self-made men, should emphasize in the life of every prominent American the mean and sordid obstacles which he had to overcome. But the urgent need of this country is not for more self-made men; it is that the men made by our vast and expensive systems of education, men who are heirs to the luxury, the refinement, the nice sense of aesthetic and ethical values created by generations of toil, of aspiration, of seeking for the high and good things of life, should take part in the work of democracy; that they should not, as the phrase is, descend into politics, but that they should lift politics up to them. The gravest menace to our social order is in the fact that youth of inherited brains, culture and opportunity, young men who need never seek money, young men who have everything to bring to the commonwealth, should not devote their talents and their time to the public service; but instead, should either dissipate both in social inanities, or should consume them in heaping up more riches for the mere vulgar pleasure of accumulation. So crying is the country's need for the service of well-born, well-educated, well-dowered youth, that history and biography might well turn away completely for a time from the self-made leader and demand that the country

be officered by men of a more perfect manufacture.

Of the most exquisite patrician workmanship was Josiah Quincy, the third of that name. Let us, therefore, since we are to deal with an aristocrat, enter the long gallery of his household and examine some of the ancestral portraits. Those from England include many a county magnate, many a member of that solid gentry which is really more noble than the House of Peers. Of the American portraits, the first is that of Edmund Quincy, who came to Boston in 1639 in the godly society of the Rev. John Cotton. No artisan or servitor was that Edmund Quincy. He was a man of property, bringing with him six servants, and purchasing from Chickatawbut, the Sachem of the Mos-Wachusetts, large tracts of land in Braintree, some of which, though now in the city of Quincy, are still family possessions.

See now the next portrait, that of the second Edmund Quincy, son to the first. He was a true English squire, living on his Braintree estates and representing that part of the colony in the General Court. The next portrait is of his sister Judith, wife to John Hull, the colonial mintmaster; and beside her is the picture of her lovely daughter, who married Judge Samuel Sewall and is said to have received as her dowry her own plump weight in her father's pinetree shillings. Not far from the portrait of the second Edmund Quincy are those of his sons Daniel and Edmund, 3d. Behind Daniel opens another gallery with faces best known of all those that Massachusetts holds in honor, for this

Daniel Quincy was the ancestor of John Adams, and the later Adamses. While Daniel was the more honorable in his descendants, Edmund was the more distinguished in his own person, for he was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts and was sent by the General Court on a special mission to England.

On either side of this Chief Justice Edmund Quincy we see the portraits of his two sons, Edmund the fourth, who is distinguished chiefly as the father of Dorothy Q., afterwards Mrs. John Hancock; and Josiah, the first of that name, who married a Jackson and, through the fortunate capture by one of his merchant vessels of a Spanish treasure ship, greatly increased the family fortunes. As a consequence, at the age of forty, this first Josiah Quincy retired from mercantile affairs and lived as a country gentleman on his estates at Braintree. He was an intimate friend of Benjamin Franklin, and it is in a letter from Franklin to this friend Quincy that occurs the famous and eternally true phrase: "There never was a good war or a bad peace."

This Colonel Quincy (so styled to distinguish him from the other Josiahs) had three sons: Edmund, Samuel, and the famous patriot, Josiah Quincy, Jr. Edmund was a leading merchant of the Boston of Revolutionary times, and died on a voyage to the West Indies. Samuel was Solicitor-General for the colonies; but, electing the cause of the crown, he sailed away with Gage's troops from Boston and never returned to America.

The third son, Josiah Quincy, Jr., was, physically and mentally, a flame of fire, the body rapidly wasting with disease, the mind burning with unquenchable zeal. He lived with that mental intensity and physical self-forgetfulness characteristic of so many consumptives. Knowing that death must come to him early, he would crowd the whole of life into a few short years. So he threw himself into the cause of the outraged colonies with boldness, almost with abandon. Truly it took courage to write in the public prints of 1767, even though veiled under the name of "Hyperion," such words as these: "Blandishments will not fascinate us, nor will threats of a 'halter' intimidate. For under God we are determined that, wheresoever, whensoever, or howsoever we shall be called to make our exit, we will die freemen." And when, on the night of the Boston Tea Party, the old South meeting-house was bursting with an excited multitude, waiting for an answer from Hutchinson, Josiah Quincy, Jr., stood in the gallery and poured hot, rash speeches out upon the fevered assembly. Harrison Gray, standing below, warned "the young gentleman in the gallery" of the dreadful results of such treasonable utterances. To which Quincy retorted: "If the old gentleman on the floor intends, by his warning to 'the young gentleman in the gallery,' to utter only a friendly voice in the spirit of paternal advice, I thank him. If his object be to terrify and intimidate, I despise him."

Quincy's greatest act, of course, was his defence, in association with John Adams, of the perpetrators

of the so-called Boston Massacre. His friends remonstrated bitterly against a course that threatened to undo his career and to nullify his previous efforts against British tyranny. Notable is his written reply to his father: . . . "These criminals, charged with murder, are *not yet legally proved guilty*, and therefore, however criminal, are entitled, by the laws of God and man, to all legal counsel and aid." . . . "I dare affirm that you and this whole people will one day REJOICE that I became an advocate for the aforesaid 'criminals,' *charged* with the murder of our fellow-citizens."

In August, 1774, Josiah Quincy, Jr., was chosen to go to Europe on a secret mission to the friends of America. As far as his letters and journals record it, this mission was most successful. He found the supporters of the American cause far more numerous than he had anticipated, and, with them, he made plans of so important a nature that they could not be intrusted to letters, of so urgent a character that there was nothing except for him to bring them, locked in his own bosom, back to America. The tempestuous seas of March and an access of his disease made such a course suicidal; and, in fact, the greatly prolonged voyage and the discomfort of the ship proved too much for his feeble body. On April 26, 1775, three days before the vessel made its port of Gloucester, Josiah Quincy, Jr., breathed his last. He had fought against death with all his unflagging courage, praying every hour that he might live long enough to have but one interview with Samuel Adams or Joseph Warren.

In 1769, this martyr to the cause of liberty had married Abigail Phillips, daughter to William Phillips, and to them, on the fourth of February, 1772, had been born a son, Josiah Quincy, 3rd. Left thus tragically a widow with this infant son, Mrs. Quincy dedicated him to the public service and brought him up with Spartan discipline. John Locke was then in vogue, and Mrs. Quincy applied both the practical and the fantastical precepts of that bachelor philosopher with the impartial literalness of conscientious motherhood. Regardless of the weather, the little Josiah was carried from his warm bed and plunged thrice into water right from the well; his feet, as Locke absurdly prescribes, were kept as wet as the weather would permit; and in other ways more sensible he was hardened to the strenuous life of those rude days. As the times were not advantageous to the settling of the child's considerable estate, the young Quincy lived with his grandfather Phillips and in temporary dependence upon him. But the old gentleman was not only a Puritan, he was an irascible one; little Josiah was noisy and high of spirit. Therefore, at the age of six, his mother had no alternative but to send the youngster off to Andover, to the Academy founded by his grandfather, to be schooled by that stern Calvinist, the Rev. Eliphalet Pearson. There for the first four years this little martyr sat on a hard bench four hours in the morning, four hours in the afternoon, conning Cheever's *Accidence*, of which, of course, not one sentence was intelligible. His seat-mate was Capt. Cutts, a man of thirty, who

was trying thus late to repair his faulty education; and the only relief, in school, from the sombre company of Cheever, the Rev. Eliphalet and the mature Captain, was in the learning of Watts' Hymns,—to us a somewhat fearful form of recreation.

By his tenth year, however, young Josiah, after floundering through Cheever's *Accidence* twenty times, reached the firmer ground of Caesar and Nepos. At fourteen he went to Harvard, and found no difficulty in finishing his course there with such credit as to be honored at Commencement with the English Oration. After graduation, his mother, from whom he had been separated twelve years, took a house in Court Street, and Josiah began the study of the law with Col. William Tudor, a man of large practice. He was determined, however, that politics should be his career, and deliberately prepared himself for them, as politics should be prepared for, in the manner of one entering a profession.

I need not dwell upon the provincialism of the Boston of those stagecoach days. As compared with our own, the life of that time seems narrow and rather stupefying. But it was simple, it was wholesome, it furnished a good soil in which to ripen strong, earnest men of affairs, men who in politics and in business would build soundly and solidly. It was an atmosphere that conspired, however, against Josiah Quincy. He was so fortunately born that he had no need to earn a name for himself; his money prospects were so good that the law was hardly more than an avocation; his position was so



secure that no friend thought it necessary to push him forward; there existed then, as now, a popular prejudice against rich men seeking office; a certain austerity made his entrance into politics a difficult one. It was therefore much to the credit of Quincy that he should have overcome these disadvantages, as real as would have been those of poverty and obscurity. But first, he was to see the world and to get married. The journey, carefully planned, ended almost as soon as begun; the marriage, as is the way of matrimony, was not planned, but lasted most happily for fifty-three years. It followed a real instance of love at first sight; and the young lady, Eliza Susan Morton, of New York, in a lifetime of devotion and congenial companionship, proved the wisdom of his sudden choice. Nothing was said to his mother, however, of his amorous state, and he started for New York (where, by the way, letters of introduction to her relatives permitted him to see much of Miss Morton), and journeyed thence to Philadelphia, where he visited his cousin John Adams (then Secretary of State), and saw more or less of President Washington, by whom he was not particularly impressed. From Philadelphia, he planned to travel on horseback to Charleston, South Carolina, and to sail from that port for the grand tour of Europe; but he was summoned back by a mercantile failure involving a portion of his fortune. He never thereafter went, or seemed to care to go, abroad. In due time he announced his engagement, married Miss Morton, and they came to live with his mother, who had



removed to a beautiful house on Pearl Street. With his marriage, Josiah Quincy's long public career began.

I have gone into this extended account of the Quincy family history, not that I might,—as is too often the case with biographers,—magnify the descendant through the aureole of his forebears, but because, in presenting any historical portrait, one must take heed to the background; and with this second Mayor of Boston, his background of family tradition was fundamental to his career. When one looks at Greenough's statue of him, one must see that rather formal figure, not set against the City Hall of to-day; but backed instead by the glow of the Revolution, by the atmosphere of aristocratic habit which the Quincys brought from England, by the golden mist of family tradition surrounding the early vision of every son of the house. At heart Josiah Quincy was not a democrat, he was a patrician. As his father had solemnly prayed, the mantle of liberty had fallen upon him; but it was the liberty of England before the Reform Bill, the liberty of gentlemen; it was not at all the freedom for which America was then groping, and which it has yet by no means attained. From his first entrance into politics Quincy was a Federalist; and he remained a Federalist to his dying day, when a whole generation had forgotten what manner of belief this Federalism was. For, like Boston, Federalism was not so much a party as a state of mind; like most states of mind it was curiously contradictory; and in Massachusetts

it was more strangely contradictory than anywhere else. Of that Massachusetts Federalism—at least after the defection of John Quincy Adams—Josiah Quincy was high-priest.

It is a difficult thing to define; but, as I understand it, this, roughly speaking, was the Federalism of Josiah Quincy's time:—It believed in a centralized government; yet placed New England above the nation, and Massachusetts above the rest of New England. Having Washington as its leader, Federalism regarded the Revolution as peculiarly its own; yet, as Lowell truly says, the Federalists were the only Tory party we have ever had. Assuming the attitude of defenders of the Constitution, they nevertheless found themselves forced, by Jefferson's policy, into a position bordering closely upon nullification. Violently in disagreement with the South, it was yet the Federalists who declared, through Quincy, that secession is sometimes right. Believing in commercial expansion, they yet opposed the territorial expansion involved in the purchase of Louisiana. Haters of England because of her past tyrannies on land and of her present tyrannies on the sea, they were driven, through their distrust of France, into a sort of advocacy of Great Britain. As the party of foreign commerce, they loved peace; yet they found themselves urging an unwilling Congress to build up a navy to be used for war. Every step leading to the War of 1812, that war itself, they opposed; and the lame and impotent conclusion of the struggle proved them to have been right; yet that mad enterprise firmly established the

party of Jefferson and absolutely killed theirs. In 1789, Federalism, with Washington and Hamilton as its leaders, was a supreme power; by 1815, it had become a disembodied ghost, killed, primarily, by the French Revolution. For the party battles of those twenty-five years were fought, not on American, but on foreign soil; the real contest between the party of Hamilton and the party of Jefferson was between the limited, but true, democratic ideals of England, and the illimitable but wholly illusory *liberté, égalité, fraternité* of France. Given time and strong leaders, Federalism might perhaps have won; but in its desperation it made the fatal mistake of allying itself with Burr; it committed the further folly of calling, in time of war, the Hartford Convention;—and its doom was sealed. Most of the principles of Federalism lived as long as Mr. Quincy, and are living to-day; but the party of Federalism died absolutely fifty years earlier than he.

As representing, then, the Federalists, a hopeless minority in the national Congress; as a Bostonian of the Bostonians—even at that day regarded by the rest of the country with a curious mingling of deference and contempt;—as the advocate of principles rather English than American, Josiah Quincy, in the very nature of things, could not reach that prominence in the councils of the nation which his mental and oratorical powers merited and which, there is every reason to believe, he coveted.

Elected to the national House of Representatives in 1804, he immediately began a special preparation

for his duties by reading and digesting all the political documents at his command, and by taking up (and this seems to hint of diplomatic ambitions) the study of French. In Congress, Mr. Quincy early made himself a leader of the minority and delivered a number of notable and truly eloquent speeches against the policies of Jefferson. As an official protector of the maritime interests of New England, he urged the proper defense of the coasts, a policy to which the Republicans were deeply opposed; as the champion of those same cruelly abused interests, he denounced the chimerical schemes of Jefferson for bringing old England to terms through the ruin of New England's commerce. Always fearful of the growing power and pretension of the South, Mr. Quincy opposed every measure threatening to extend slavery or giving representative power based on servile population. Above all, he opposed that supreme measure for increasing, as he believed, the power of the slave states, the purchase of Louisiana. Historic is his great speech against the Louisiana Purchase, for in it he enunciated thus early that doctrine of States' rights, which was to vex the country for years, and to lead finally to Civil War. In arguing that the administration had no right to purchase Louisiana without first obtaining the consent of each one of the thirteen original states, Mr. Quincy said: "It is my deliberate opinion, that, if this bill passes, the bonds of this Union are virtually dissolved; that the States which compose it are free from their moral obligations, and that, as it will be the right of all, so it will be the

duty of some, to prepare definitely for a separation; amicably if they can, violently if they must."

The time of his Congressional service was distinctly a war period; and in the face of impending war, the minority party is always in a difficult situation, so loud is the demand upon it to bury principle under so-called patriotism. Mr. Quincy did not escape this dilemma of the minority leader, and it is too long after the events intelligently to weigh his conduct. On the whole it seems to have been wise; and certainly it was always honorable. Opposing in every way the approaching conflict with Great Britain, which he rightly called a war of party, not of the nation, he yet alienated many of his Federalist friends by voting, when war seemed inevitable, for troops and munitions. Determined not to lend himself, after it broke out, even to the discussion of a conflict so obnoxious to his party, he nevertheless found himself impelled by events to speak; and with especial vigor he denounced and ridiculed that most fatuous of projects, the proposed invasion of Canada. This was almost his last speech in Congress; for, disgusted with the trend of politics, wearied with the futile labors of a minority leader, Mr. Quincy had absolutely refused re-nomination. He therefore retired from Congress on March 4, 1813, after eight years of service, leaving Washington, as he declared, "with the feeling of a man quitting Tadmor in the Wilderness, 'where creeping things had possession of the palaces, and foxes looked out of the windows.'"

Retiring to Massachusetts, he watched, with

gloomy eyes, the progress of the war, uttering in public speech and print warnings against the course of Madison's administration. Ten years before, just prior to his election to Congress, he had sat in the Senate of Massachusetts. In 1813, he was again elected to that body and served honorably until 1820. But his boldness of speech and his independence of mind, especially his opposition to his party's policy in regard to the separation of Maine from Massachusetts, so put him out of favor with the party leaders that he was flatly dropped by them in 1820. So incensed were the voters of the party, however, by this action of its managers, that they took steps for Mr. Quincy to represent them in the lower house of the Legislature, putting him at the head of the ticket and electing him by a large majority. In the following year he was chosen Speaker of the State House of Representatives, an office which he was peculiarly fitted to adorn, and the year after was re-elected to the position. Before that session ended, however, he resigned from the Legislature to accept the office of Judge of the Municipal Court.

From the National Congress to a municipal judgeship may seem a retrogression in public office; but it did not so appear to Mr. Quincy, who not only made any position which he chose to accept important, but who sought this variety of official experience as a physician or a lawyer seeks opportunities of widening his professional view. He realized that he was taking part in the greatest political experiment which the world has ever seen; he appreci-

ated that his generation would have exceptional power in the right shaping of that experiment; and he desired to see the working of it and to influence the trend of it upon as many sides as possible.

Assisting, then, in both state and nation, in this early and pregnant translation of English into American forms and ideals of democracy, Josiah Quincy was next to take a vital part in that equally important process, the evolution of the New England town meeting into the administration of a modern city.

In the long, varied and publicly important career of Mr. Quincy, nothing else he did was of so much consequence to his nation, nothing else he did has had such an influence upon the development of America, as the six years which he spent in the Mayor's chair. The population of Boston, early in the nineteenth century, approached 40,000, and had quite outgrown the town-meeting system of administration. A nursing-mother to democracy as that system had been, Boston had become too big for it and needed new sources of political nourishment. So alive, however, were our forefathers to the importance of the town-meeting as an educator for citizenship, that for a number of years they put up with its inconveniences and even dangers, rather than enter upon untried paths. Mr. Quincy himself opposed the city charter with much vigor, even to the time of its adoption; but when the town was finally forced by the cumbersomeness of the old order to change its administration, it was plain to everyone, it was borne in upon Mr. Quincy him-



self, that he alone of her citizens was fitted by position, temperament and knowledge of the situation to undertake the difficult duties of transforming Boston from a country town into a metropolis. By a political combination, however, into which it is not necessary to enter, Mr. Quincy, after having consented to run for Mayor, found it expedient to withdraw his name in favor of his kinsman John Phillips, an honorable gentleman, who as first Mayor of Boston, performed in a dignified, though rather perfunctory way, the more obvious duties of his executive position.

Mr. Phillips' health being impaired, he refused to stand for re-election; and, the complications of the previous year having been unravelled, Mr. Quincy was elected, without opposition, second Mayor of the city of Boston. And this was the situation which he found confronting him. He found Boston,—for those days a considerable city,—still being administered under village conditions. He found all the communal services, such as street-cleaning, entirely inadequate, because of the impossibility, under a town government, of securing the money needed for those services, and of administering them in a centralized and economical way. He found,—for the reason that the business of the city had long outgrown the grasp of the town meeting,—much authority alienated from the citizens and vested in committees having undefined, and therefore wholly uncertain, powers. And he found a large proportion of the inhabitants, in spite of the logic of the situation, still fiercely insistent upon



town-meeting methods and quite unwilling to transfer their allegiance to the officers created by the city charter. Himself but very recently an advocate of the town-meeting, a believer, theoretically, at least, that *Vox populi vox Dei*, Mr. Quincy had yet a mind so clear, a training for politics so thorough, a view into the future so keen, that he grasped the needs of the situation and saw matters so far gone into disorder and towards disintegration that there could be but one remedy,—a temporary, benevolent dictatorship. And fortunate for Boston that just at this point in her history she had at hand such a dictator as Josiah Quincy! Absolutely incorruptible, perfectly fearless, indefatigable, fond of minutiae, with a sternness of bearing and yet grace of manner enabling him to overrule much opposition, he had also—what was essential at that juncture—the spirit and attitude of the English aristocrat, of the ruler of men by the divine right of birth. Thus equipped, Mr. Quincy entered, in 1823, upon his new and arduous duties; and in the six years of his incumbency he so wonderfully transformed this city as justly to deserve the title of “The Great Mayor.”

In the first place—and this, as his keen mind perceived, was essential to his success—he made himself an autocrat by assuming the headship of practically every committee of the administration. In his “Municipal History of Boston,” he is careful to pay tribute to the zeal and wisdom of his associates on the Board of Aldermen and City Council; but it is clear in every act and speech of Mr.

Quincy's that those bodies were but instruments serving to carry out his masterful and almost sovereign will.

The first year of Mr. Quincy's incumbency was given mainly to questions of municipal housekeeping: to problems of cleaning the streets and yards, and of removing garbage and other nuisances. Such labor might be a fruitful theme, perhaps, for the poetic prose of Carlyle or the prosaic poetry of Walt Whitman; but it is not the kind of work which makes great reputations. It is neither intellectually stimulating nor aesthetically refreshing. To every detail of the problem, however, Mr. Quincy gave the vigor of his unusual mind and the zeal of his extraordinary physical activity. How little the town had cared for such matters is shown by the fact that, until this first term of Mr. Quincy's, there had never been expended, in any year, over \$1000 for the cleaning of streets, the work of making them decent having been left to suburban farmers who cleaned when they felt like it, carried away only such dirt as seemed to them valuable, and used in the removal of this and the more noxious filth of the town open ox-teams whose slow progress through the streets was a saturnalia of nastiness. Moreover, upon Mr. Quincy's inauguration, the responsibility for this part of the municipal housekeeping was divided among three independent boards, with uncertain and overlapping powers. By the end of his first year, however, the new Mayor had brought it about that he, with his Board of Aldermen, should have supreme control of the streets, and that the

Board of Health should have equal power over the household wastes; had banished the farmers and their oxen; had given the city its first comprehensive cleaning with brooms, resulting in the collection of 3000 tons of dirt; had made the care of the streets a definite and systematic work of the city performed by its own men and wagons; had decreed regulations looking to the regular and decent removal of garbage; and had forced the farmers to wholesale and proper methods in the cleansing of the drains and cesspools.

Thus fortunately were the conflicting authorities over the city's physical health disposed of; but not so easily could he handle that old and firmly entrenched board which supervised the city's moral health,—the Overseers of the Poor. To them Dr. Hale's definition of a board as a long, narrow body which never comes to a point, may well be applied. One of the hardest and most prolonged struggles of Mr. Quincy's six years in office was with those Overseers,—estimable but unenlightened gentlemen who clung equally to personal authority and to antiquated methods of procedure. Under their regime, the city's poor, whether such by age and infirmity or by vice and crime, whether old men or boys, whether men or women, whether sick or well, were herded together in an outgrown building upon Leverett Street. To supersede this, a more enlightened committee, in which Mr. Quincy had been active, had proposed the purchase of sixty-three acres of land in what was then the country region of South Boston, and the building thereon

of a house of industry, a house of correction and an institution for juvenile offenders, leaving the infirm, respectable poor in the almshouse upon Leverett Street. It is not necessary to enter into the details of this long-drawn controversy in which Mr. Quincy finally triumphed; but it is a struggle worthy of the pen of Dickens; and by following it one appreciates, as in no other way, the enormous strides which sociology in the last eighty years has made.

One gets a view, too, of the change which has come over our cities through the increase of population and the influx of foreign immigration, when one reads that the entire police force at Mr. Quincy's command embraced twenty-four constables and eight night watchmen, of whom no more than eighteen were ever on duty at one time. Boston was then, indeed, in spite of its size, a village of Puritans, every householder constituting himself an officer of the law in his house, in his shop, and even in the streets themselves. Nevertheless, a city with such a wide commercial horizon as Boston's could not be without at least some imported wickedness; and for the ill-disposed there had grown up a nest of evil houses with which the constabulary declared themselves powerless to cope. Mr. Quincy took the matter into his own hands and by the skillful resurrection of old statutes against fiddlers and tipplers, suppressed the musicians who played for the lewd dancing, closed the saloons communicating with the evil houses, and thus brought to a quick ending this flaunting of vice in the face of decency, this

threat to the lives of innocent passers-by. On the other hand, when a formidable body of so-called good citizens tried to suppress other disreputable places by mob violence, Mr. Quincy, hastily organizing the truckmen of the city—strong-handed and stout-hearted men—placed himself at their head and, at no little danger to himself, dispersed the rioters. Notwithstanding these incidents, the Mayor saw no reason to increase the constabulary during his term of office; but he made it more efficient by putting it under the single and responsible control of a City Marshal appointed by himself.

The next reform undertaken by Mayor Quincy was the reorganization of the Fire Department. Impossible as it is now to imagine it, that city of nearly 50,000 inhabitants, with its buildings mainly of wood, was protected—or rather should one say unprotected—against loss by fire by fourteen old tubs without hose, worked by hand brakes, and kept filled by lines of volunteer citizens, who were expected, upon an alarm of fire, to rush to the scene with leathern buckets for water and a canvas bag for loot. The fire companies were social rather than municipal organizations; they were separately governed by “fire wards” chosen by popular vote; their spirit was of rivalry as to which should get closest to the fire rather than as to which should save the most property; and as to the volunteer citizens, with their buckets and their bags, their running hither and thither, their dropping out of line whenever tired, their inclination rather to see the fun than to do the work,—one may faintly pic-

ture what disastrous pandemonium they created at a fire in those days.

New York and Philadelphia had for some time outgrown such provincialism, and had established a paid fire service controlled by a single responsible head, and equipped with engines of some power, using long lines of hose; and Mr. Quincy, after having studied the methods of those cities, proposed a similar system for Boston. So sure were the fire companies, however, of their hold upon the populace that, by asking for more pay and privileges, they brought their power to an open test. The Mayor refusing to grant their demands, the entire force, upon a threatened day, resigned. Mr. Quincy immediately accepted their resignations, appointed loyal citizens in their places, and in a few hours created a new department. Having won this first victory, he followed up his advantage by submitting his plan for a new fire-service to the citizens, who, after much violent haranguing and many appeals to the spirit of ancient liberties, accepted it by a close vote, and the new order was at once inaugurated. Modern, convenient engine houses were built, the latest improved fire engines were ordered from New York, lengths of hose sufficient to do away with the absurd lines of citizens bought, and throughout the city were established huge cisterns for emergency water-supplies, cisterns which were picturesquely denounced as "inverted monuments to Quincy's extravagance."

The schools, also, engaged Mr. Quincy's earnest attention, and his son, in that admirable memoir of



him which is a model for biographers, declares that, during his father's administration, they were in better condition than they ever before had been. This, however, is but faint praise; for we know, from Horace Mann's reports, what general inefficiency characterized the public education of that time. From motives of economy Mr. Quincy took one distinctly backward step in urging, and with his accustomed mastery of the situation bringing about, the abolition of the Girls' High School. This school had been earnestly desired by the people, but, in Mr. Quincy's opinion, was far too great a burden upon the city, especially as it was attended mainly by the daughters of men, as he declared, amply able to pay for the private tuition of their daughters.

The monumental work of Mayor Quincy's six administrations was, of course, the great market-house usually called by his name. The result of years of work, of finesse, of bold foresight met with every sort of denunciation and evil insinuation, is best summarized in Mr. Quincy's own words: "A granite market house," he writes, "two stories high, five hundred and thirty-five feet long, fifty feet wide, covering twenty-seven thousand feet of land, including every essential accommodation, was erected, at a cost of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Six new streets were opened and a seventh greatly enlarged, including one hundred and sixty-seven thousand square feet of land; and flats, docks, and wharf-rights obtained, of the extent of one hundred and forty-two thousand square feet. All this was accomplished in the centre of a populous

city, not only without any tax, debt, or burden upon its pecuniary resources,—notwithstanding, in the course of the operations, funds to the amount of upwards of eleven hundred thousand dollars had been employed,—but with large permanent additions to its real and productive property.”

But, as Mr. Quincy foresaw from the beginning and predicted in terms in his first inaugural, such dictatorship as his could not long be brooked by a population already uneasy under the changes from the old order and the increased taxation. Elected in the first place by a vote practically unanimous, the Mayor each year saw, as he expected, the opposition polling a large and larger vote, until, at the end of his sixth term, it became plain that he could not be re-elected, and he refused, therefore, to be a candidate. The reaction earnestly fostered by the old fire companies, disgruntled boards and other malcontents had come, and the city, suffering one of those revulsions inevitable under popular government, went from bad to worse, until relief was sought in the Legislature. Unfortunately it has been sought there again and again until Boston has almost ceased to govern herself, the citizens weakly inviting the rule of men from other parts of Massachusetts rather than to take the trouble of reassuming the burden of self-government.

Scarcely had he left the mayoralty than Mr. Quincy was elected to the presidency of Harvard University, in succession to Dr. Kirkland. While wholly honorable to himself and beneficial to the University, this part of Mr. Quincy's career was



probably the least important to history of all his public service. The modern conception of a college president as a great educational administrator, as a high leader of thought, as a moulder of civic and national life, had not then arisen. Mr. Quincy's genius, therefore, which would have eminently fitted him for such a rôle, could not at that time be of avail, for the conservatism of the community would not have permitted him thus to exercise it. On the other hand, he had not that peculiar genius as a leader of young men which distinguished such presidents as Mark Hopkins and Eliphalet Nott, men who made men by a sort of infusion into their pupils of their own great spirits. Rather did Mr. Quincy follow the traditional conception of a college presidency as a safe haven after the turmoils of public or ecclesiastical life, a haven in which a man of eminence might ride out, in dignified anchorage, his declining years. It is true that his successor, President Walker, called him the great organizer of the University; it is true that he did much to place the disordered finances of the University upon a sound and healthy basis; it is true that he advocated a certain freedom in study which has over-developed itself into the present free elective system; it is true that he wrote a useful, if quite uninspired, history of the college; and it is eminently true that as a figure-head in the many semi-public functions in which Harvard properly takes a leading part, Mr. Quincy's patrician grace of form and bearing, and his dignity of manner made him honorably conspicuous. Moreover, he was active in building

Gore Hall and in establishing the Observatory and the School of Law. Those, indeed, are his three chief monuments at the University; and it were, perhaps, ungrateful to ask larger memorials of his sixteen years in the Harvard presidency.

In 1845, being then in his 74th year, Mr. Quincy retired from Harvard and prepared to enjoy in honored leisure his probably short remaining span of life. As it proved, however, he had still nineteen more years of usefulness; and these were beautifully spent by him in literary and agricultural pursuits; in occasional public appearances; especially in the calm rôle of a philosopher wise through age, serene through experience, to whom men gladly turn for counsel in perplexity, for admonition in their hot-headed haste. Spending his winters in the comfortable Park Street house and his summers on his wide acres at Quincy, he walked slowly and always erect, clear-minded, sunny-tempered, down the autumn slope of life, death meeting him, in his ninety-third year, as the rich glow of the sunset meets and enwraps the traveler whom we on the hill-top of middle life see one moment sharply limned against the sky and whom, the next moment, we lose in the deepening glory of the all-sheltering night.

Some men are made great by the positions which they occupy; the positions which Josiah Quincy occupied were made great by him. It is easy to say that by joining the political majority his might have been a supreme national instead of a leading Massachusetts name; but the finest service that a man

can render in a republic is to be a true, an incorruptible, an unswerving leader of the minority. Genuine criticism, honest opposition, courageous denunciation of the majority are the *sine qua non* of democratic government; and I do not hesitate to say that Quincy did ten times the service to his country in leading the opposition than he could have performed had he had all the hosts of Jefferson at his beck and call.

It may be said again that his talents were too high for such places as a municipal judgeship and the mayoralty of a fledgling city. No man's talents are too high for the doing of any honorable work for his city or his State; and unless men of the stamp of Josiah Quincy learn this lesson, the Republic which should be the anxious care of its best sons will fall a prey to its corruptest offspring. Again it may be said—and truly said—that in assuming autocratic power as Mayor, Mr. Quincy gave a wrong impetus to municipal government, a trend from which our cities, with their bosses and their dependence upon State Legislatures, are to-day sadly suffering. But Mr. Quincy could not foresee this; he could only do, as he did, the work at hand in the best way at that time possible. The situation confronting him was so bad that only a dictatorship could remedy it; and he sacrificed his own peace, he sacrificed his popularity, in order to perform his duty.

Duty, courage, probity,—these were the moral springs of his career. Were he standing on the floor of Congress bearding the vituperative Henry

Clay, or were he listening to the plea of some police court outcast, his single aim was to achieve the right. Were he exposing, in bitter words, the true motives of the fiery slave-holders, or were he calmly disdaining their challenges to duel, his moral courage never flinched. In all his positions of trust, in all the large opportunities for good and for evil that came to him, his private interests never once eclipsed or even shadowed his clear vision of the public good. Of a noble race, he kept untarnished its great name. Heir to a conspicuous patriotism, he cherished and increased that splendid heritage. In his life he ennobled living; in his death he made dying beautiful; in his varied work he demonstrated the high possibilities of intelligent and devoted citizenship; in the way that work was done, he set before the men of his and of every generation a standard which some have achieved and to which others may attain; but which few or none can surpass.

## V

## THE SHAYS REBELLION

THE final downfall of Shays', or, as it is more euphoniously termed, the Shays Rebellion, was almost coincident with the graduation from Harvard of John Quincy Adams. His mother, writing from London upon both events says: "I have never once regretted the resolutions (my son) took of quitting Europe, and placing himself upon the theatre of his own country; where, if his life is spared, I presume he will neither be an idle or even useless spectator. Heaven grant that he may not have more distressing scenes before him, and a gloomier stage to tread than those on which his father has acted for twelve years past. But the curtain rises before him; and instead of Peace waving her olive branch, or Liberty seated in a triumphal car, or Commerce, Agriculture, and Plenty pouring forth their stores, Sedition hisses, Treason roars, Rebellion gnashes her teeth, Mercy suspends the justly merited blow, but Justice strikes the guilty victims."

Thus grandiloquently, but truly, does this literary lady sum up this momentous episode in American history, the incidents of which were trivial, sometimes even farcical; but the causes and effects of which are of deep significance in the development of the United States.

Habitual novel readers are seldom disconcerted

by the mishaps and sorrows of the successive chapters, because they feel certain that in the end the lovers will be united and live happily forever after. But those whose experience of life goes beyond the blissful last-chapter know that its genuine sorrows,—and also its enduring joys—are at that point only just beginning. So it is with the story of the American Revolution as told in school-books,—many of which, by the way, are as ingeniously fictitious as is “The Prisoner of Zenda.” The difficulties and dangers of that great struggle for independence are dwelt upon with a detail out of all historical proportion; but when at last, worn out by the genius and persistency of Washington, the strength of the British army surrenders at Yorktown, the infant mind is given to infer that, united in political matrimony, the states are now to live happily forevermore. As a matter of fact, however, the difficulties, the dangers, the political embarrassments of the Revolution were really less than were those of the years following the surrender of Cornwallis and preceding the final and general adoption of the Constitution. The real test of our moral strength as a people came then; and that state which, on the whole, had to bear the severest strain, that state wherein a large proportion—possibly a majority—of the inhabitants were for many months ready to forswear democracy, that state whose disaffection would have meant, probably, the dissolution of the union, was the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It is customary, I think, to regard the Shays Rebellion as a petty revolt of the camp-following of the disbanded



army, stirred up by paid agents of Great Britain. Another view regards it as an attempt of ambitious politicians to seize the government, an attempt, in the swelling periods of the historian of Worcester, "of loftier Catilines behind their humbler instruments." But the British agents seem to have been as mythical as the "British gold" of a later period; and if there were Catilines, none of the many Ciceros of that time arose to denounce them. Instead, it seems to me, this Rebellion represented a widespread and well-grounded disaffection of respectable citizens, of tried soldiers, of serious persons with genuine grievances. Therefore, had its leaders equalled its rank and file, the state might easily have been overthrown. Fortunately for history, the Catilines so darkly hinted at did not appear. Though Shays' name is forever linked with this rebellion, it was because he and not a stronger man headed it, that law and order triumphed in the end.

The close of the Revolution found the people of the United States united only in name; it found them dissevered from Great Britain but not yet cemented among themselves; it found them, as was to be expected, demoralized by that social "Katzenjammer" which always follows war. The wheels of normal industry had been stopped by war; the extraordinary industries and activities of war had, in turn, been stopped by peace; there was thus a double dislocation of trade and industry. The farmers, having tasted the life of city and of camp, were finding the drudgery of the fields irksome if not distasteful; the young men, after the excitement

of battle and the idleness of camps, were rebelling against the uneventful earning of their daily bread; the soldiers in general, having long been supported by a grateful people, were finding it hard to forage for themselves; above all, both soldiers and civilians, having learned, under the teaching of war,—that best friend of debtors,—how easy it is to borrow, and to postpone one's debts, were developing very hazy notions as to financial obligations and were coming to believe that freedom carries with it the right to free borrowing and unlimited expenditure.

But the immediate close of the Revolution did not, as I think is generally believed, find the country poor. Importation had, it is true, been largely suspended; but that fact had but conserved the specie and built up crude domestic industries; the fisheries had been greatly interfered with, so that, for example, the whaling fleet of Nantucket had been reduced from 150 to only 19 sail; but it is fair to suppose that some part at least of this loss had been made good by privateering. The main reliance of the country had been, however, upon agriculture; and the war, far from stopping that, had given it an unusual market in the necessities of the army and the fleet. Moreover, by the exertions of our foreign representatives, a good deal of hard cash had come into the country from France, from Spain and from Holland, money for whose payment the country, it is true, stood pledged, but the reckoning day for which had not yet come. In this way, and through the French allies, with their large purchases of provisions and supplies, always



paid for in specie, there had been put into circulation probably a greater amount of gold and silver than the country ever before had seen. But this highly prosperous condition of the early 1780's served but to make more unbearable the distresses which so quickly and so inevitably followed. I say inevitably, because at least three economic forces were at work to plunge the people, with extraordinary speed, from seeming riches into a poverty so harsh that it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that for months Massachusetts possessed scarcely a dollar of good money and hardly a dollar's worth of credit. These three forces were: first, the tremendous importations from abroad, which naturally followed peace, which had to be paid for in specie, and which, as they were only to a slight degree offset by exportations, quickly drained the country of its gold and silver; second, the proposed attempts to keep up a show of prosperity by issuing paper money and by making commodities a legal tender; third, by the fact that the enormous debts contracted by the Continental Congress, by the states, and by individuals, during the war, were rapidly coming due and were clamoring for payment.

More, perhaps, than any other state, Massachusetts suffered by this economic crisis. Generous of men and supplies for the war, she had made a real effort to meet her obligations. On the other hand, through her coast cities, the chief American ports of entry, her specie, in the fever of importation after the peace, had been the first to flee. And to meet this double drain she had almost no im-

mediate resources. Her manufactures, feeble, but a former main source of revenue, had been almost prostrated; her fisheries languished; worst of all, her shipping was still paralyzed by the commercial tyranny of England. For that country, beaten upon land, still ruled the sea, and by decreeing that only British vessels should bring goods to herself and to her colonies, had virtually closed all lucrative ports to the ships of the United States. As to the agriculture of Massachusetts, that was of little avail; for then, as now, her rocky hillsides yielded better men than crops.

During the heat of conflict, no promise had seemed too large to make, no stake too great to play for liberty; and while all were busy with war none had claimed payment; perhaps, in the generous fervor of the struggle, had not expected ever to enforce his claims. But by the year 1784 sentiment had disappeared; these pledges which a desperate need had forced were pressing for redemption; and the nation, the state, the individual had almost nothing with which to meet them. Under the articles of confederation, the central government had no resources save such as might be granted by the individual states; those states had, to be sure, the power of taxation; but the right to tax a people desperately poor, is but the power to incite rebellion. So denuded of every form of money had Massachusetts, by 1785, become; so demoralized were her people by a war which was in itself a protest against taxation, that it became the rule not to pay one's taxes, and he who did so was looked upon as an eccentric idealist,

comparable perhaps to the modern citizen who freely and honestly declares his personal estate.

With a debt to the Congress of over five millions, with a debt on her own account of over four millions, and owing her own soldiers seven hundred thousand more, Massachusetts would have been foolish to enforce the taxation necessary to meet these obligations. At that time the only form of tax was a direct one; to have collected it would have meant a squeezing of fifty dollars out of every man, woman and child in the state, it would have meant, according to a trustworthy contemporary, a confiscation of at least one third of the total income of the state's inhabitants. "How absurd," writes a newspaper correspondent signing himself "Farmer," "are the tax collector's calls for twenty dollars at a time when that is more money than we ever see." What made this impossible taxation doubly galling was the fact that it represented, in the graphic Yankee slang, "Payment for a dead horse." Most of the state and national debt was due for the expenses of the war, an event now past and the fruits of which seemed already dubious. That, then, the authorities of Massachusetts made only feeble attempts to collect the revenue, that there was agitation for the abolition of the direct tax, that there was clamor for the immediate sale of the public lands in the province of Maine (a project more easily proposed than carried out), that a large party demanded repudiation of the public debts, and that a still more formidable body called for that perennial quack medicine, paper money, was, under the circumstances, only to be

expected. And all this agitation over the taxes took on a personal aspect from the fact that among the largest creditors of the government were, on the one hand, the veterans of the war, holding notes for their wages; and, on the other, speculators who had exploited the soldiers' poverty by buying up these notes at a ruinous discount. These speculators, many persons claimed, the government had no obligation, and no right, to pay.

But, while the state authorities and the Congress would not and could not force the people to pay their taxes, private debts were quite another matter. Private debts had behind them real flesh-and-blood, impatient creditors, a host of lawyers eager to bring action, courts to sustain those actions, laws of attachment and sale to satisfy them, and jails open to punish the debtor who would not or whose property could not liquidate the debt. The horrors of debtors' prisons were then unspeakable; yet into them were thrown, by due process of law, men who had fought for the country, men who stood highest in their several communities, men whose very devotion and self-sacrifice, whose very trust in the state, had brought them to this wretched pass. In the face of many such instances, with the courts crowded with suits—in 1784, for example, Worcester County, with a population of 50,000, saw 2,000 actions for debt, and a single attorney brought 100 actions in but a single court—what wonder that lawyers were denounced as tools of tyranny and the courts before which they plead as monstrous agents for devouring the poor? Moreover, the traditions

of England were still potent in her late colonies, distinctions of "classes" and "masses" were marked, and there seemed good reason to fear that the gentry would claim public office as their prerogative and would use the power thus gained to build up a landed aristocracy. This fear was magnified, in Massachusetts, by the fact that the seat of government was at Boston, the centre of wealth and of colonial power, but not the geographical centre of the state. This unsuitability of Boston for the Capital, Springfield and Worcester were quick to point out and eager to enlarge upon.

Loud and louder grew the cry of complaint from those who, in imitation of the French, were pleased to style themselves the "People." Is it for poverty and hardship such as this that we fought during all those bitter years? Have we freed ourselves from a tyrannical king only to find ourselves bound hand and foot by pressing debts and an impossible taxation? Are we simply running from the distant oppression of England into the immediate bondage of lawyers with high fees and courts with power to sell a man's all and to imprison him in a pest-hole if the debt be not then discharged? If this be liberty, give us license, and that we may enjoy license, away with courts and law!

Almost equal to that against the law, was the outcry against luxury. The newspapers of the day, precursors of our more modern "Transcript," were full of letters denouncing the wearing of foreign gew-gaws and the eating of strange, superfluous dishes. No modern Puritan scoring the vanities of

the Metropolitan Opera House, is half so fiery as were those old fellows, who signed themselves *Publicus*, *Senex*, and the like, and who attributed all the sorrows of the nation to miss's ribands and madam's satin gown. Moved by these denunciations, the ladies of Boston, as usual, started a club for the discouragement of luxurious living; but, as a contemporary writer goes out of his way to remark, "they produced by so doing little alleviation of the general distress."

While, however, the good ladies were of their own choice donning homespun, the lawyers, without their own consent, were being summarily dealt with. The people attacked them at the most obvious point by depriving them of office, by driving them from that public life in which, theretofore, they had been the principal actors. It is bad enough, the rural, and especially the western rural voters said, to have the General Court meet in Boston, that purse-proud seat of gentility, to which it is so long and so expensive a journey for our representatives to go, and where they are subject to the wiles and temptations of a corrupt metropolis; but at least we can exclude these greedy lawyers from the halls of legislation, sending there instead our incorruptible selves. So the General Court of 1785 contained scarcely a lawyer, being made up almost wholly of new and untried men. This action, however, gave the wicked attorneys but the more leisure, and made them but the more eager, to secure fees.

There is reason to suspect that Hancock—shrewd politician that he was,—foresaw the coming storm;

for in 1785 he resigned the governorship. His plea was ill-health; and it is true that his contemporaries describe him (though he was less than fifty years old) as a feeble, wasted old man; but had the times been less troubled and the outlook for democracy more rosy, it seems unlikely that he would have resigned an office that pointed so directly towards the goal of his ambition, the soon-to-be-created Presidency. At the April election following, the people were unable to choose a successor; therefore the selection fell into the General Court, and from the list sent up to the Senate by the House the former body chose, wisely as it would afterwards appear, James Bowdoin. But it was a selection far from agreeable to a large number of persons in Massachusetts, for Bowdoin was regarded as distinctly of the aristocratic party, quite out of sympathy with the people's grievances. Moreover, his only daughter had married Sir John Temple, a Boston boy by birth, but a British aristocrat by inheritance. During the first year of Bowdoin's service, the situation, both political and financial, was growing ever more alarming; nevertheless no overt act was done, and in the spring of 1786 the governor was reëlected by a considerable popular majority.

In August of that year, however, the widespread discontent at last took shape in various conventions which, representing in some instances as many as fifty towns, met at various places in Worcester, Middlesex and Bristol counties. These assemblages were orderly and their members were, in the main, sober and thoughtful persons. Conducted with



parliamentary form and keeping in communication with one another, after the manner of the earlier committees of correspondence, these conventions first solemnly declared themselves constitutional and then, with equal gravity, made demands upon the General Court which, if granted, would have destroyed the constitution of the state.

The grievances set forth by these gatherings vary in character and in number; but the main objects of their attack were the fees and practices of the lawyers, the Courts of common pleas and general sessions of the peace, the burdensome taxes and methods of taxation, the excessive salaries of government officials (especially the £1100 received by the governor himself), the meeting of the General Court at Boston, the tendency towards an office-holding aristocracy, and, worst of all, the scarcity of money and the collapse of credit. The remedies proposed for the money-famine would be funny had they not been so serious and did not most of them still survive, a standing menace to our industrial life. The favorite panacea was a paper money with a fixed ratio of depreciation by which its value would be gradually less until, at the end of ten or twenty years, its worth would wholly vanish. This, as anyone without common sense can easily see, would relieve all debtors of their obligations without need of any exertion upon their part.

Much as these conventions might elaborate or sub-divide their grievances, there were fundamentally, however, only two: the excessive taxation, and the scarcity of money. Both these evils were but



the natural result of such a war as the American Revolution, and their only cure was to be found in patience, frugality, industry and mutual forbearance. To preach these admirable virtues, however, to men on the verge of starvation and threatened with a debtor's prison, was to ask self-denial of the famished tiger. Here were the hard facts: taxes which they could not meet, debts which they could not pay, jails to rot in if they did not pay. But taxes, debts, jails would be powerless to reach them without the action of the courts. *Ergo*, stop the Courts; at least until the Legislature should have had opportunity to consider and to redress their wrongs. So, in that same August, while the several conventions were putting their grievances upon paper, 1500 men at Northampton put theirs into action by assembling and overawing the courts into an immediate adjournment.

This was a step so subversive of the state that Governor Bowdoin at once issued a stirring proclamation calling upon all officers and good citizens to protect the judges, and commanding the General Court to convene in special session on September 27th.

Pending this coming together of the Legislature three other sessions of the courts were to be holden, the first at Worcester, on September 5. To protect this sitting, the militia of the County were ordered out; but some flatly refused; others excused themselves, like the wedding guests of the parable; and those who responded were but half-hearted in their work. Therefore the "Regulators," as they

now called themselves, led by Adam Wheeler of Hubbardston, had no difficulty in virtually taking possession of the town. To the number of about 300, with sprigs of evergreen in their hats and with a pine tree for a standard, they surrounded the court-house and, when the judges appeared to open court, confronted them at the door with bayonets. General Ward, the chief justice, met them like a soldier, harangued them upon their wickedness, would answer no man till he knew his name and residence, and metaphorically bared his bosom to the steel. Nevertheless, he and his associates finally retired to a private house and, after a day or two of fruitless parleying, adjourned the Court to a more propitious season.

No shots were exchanged between the rioters and the representatives of order; but there was much bandying of words. The sheriff of Worcester, finding one of their grievances to be his alleged high fees, told them, with much spirit, that if this were their complaint they need trouble themselves no longer, for he would gladly hang them all for nothing.

The success of the "regulators" at Worcester occasioned the keenest anxiety over the next sessions of the Courts, which were to be held, all on September 12, at Great Barrington, Taunton, and Concord. At Taunton the dignity of the state was maintained by the vigor of General Cobb, who, practically against the Governor's orders, paraded the militia and saved the court from insult, though the judges deemed it prudent to adjourn. At Great

Barrington and Concord, however, what a travesty of official dignity was seen! At the former town, the militia general, seeing the rioters assembled in force, proposed, like a true officer of *opera bouffe*, that the question of the sitting of the courts be put to popular vote, those in favor to gather on one side of the road and those opposed on the other. This remarkable referendum resulted as was to be expected: the Courts showed but a beggarly handful of adherents, and the wise general retired with a whole skin and doubtless delighted with his powers of strategy.

Concord made hardly a better showing. The Governor, distracted by a multitude of counsels, was on the whole disposed to display the full power of the state; but a self-constituted committee of 24 towns dissuaded him, assuring him that they would carry out instead a conciliatory policy sure to succeed. So the orders for the assembling of the militia were countermanded and, on the morning when the court was to convene, the committee began its noble work of moral suasion. First it met at the meeting-house, and, after prayer by Dr. Ripley, declared itself, quite unnecessarily, a constitutional assembly. It then appointed two sub-committees: one to wait upon the insurgents who, under the leadership of Job Shattuck, a loud-mouthed demagogue, were parading about the town; the other to wait upon the judges, gathered somewhat timorously in Jones' tavern, to tell them what the committee was going to do for them,—for which information the judges declared themselves truly

grateful.

Although the first sub-committee labored till quarter past three o'clock, all they could get from Shattuck and his crew were two manifestos: the first that the "voice of the people" forbade the Courts to meet; the second that they might meet and adjourn, *provided* they went not near the court-house; replies which, it is stated, "pained the committee." Meanwhile the leaders of the mob were making various braggart threats that all not joining them would be run out of town at the point of the bayonet or, as one authority has it, would be "put to the sword." "The time has come," shouted Shattuck, "to sweep away all debts!" "Oh yes, Job," drawled a voice from the crowd, "We know all about them two farms you can't never pay for."

Meanwhile other insurgents had come in from Worcester County and, all eloquent with New England rum, paraded before Jones' tavern, uttering threats and curses. Finally Dr. Bartlett, of the sub-committee which in the morning had waited upon the judges to tell them how much was to be done for them, was deputed to go out and to inform the rioters, with due deference, that the court had decided not to sit.

This wretched fiasco had several results: it roused the citizens of Boston to the holding of meetings in support of the government, and to the sending of an address, truly step-motherly in its scorn and admonition, to the other towns. It also showed the insurgents that, having gone thus far, they must, to save their necks, go farther, and control, if they

could, the Supreme Court; for therein lay, of course, the power to indict them. Therefore, in late September, the "regulators" assembled in force at Springfield, where the Supreme Court was to sit; and, while they did not prevent it from convening, they virtually controlled its action and secured from it an early adjournment. Here at Springfield met for the first time the two chief leaders; on the one side, General Shepard, whose vigor at a later date was to kill the insurrection, and on the other, Daniel Shays, whose name has gained a bad eminence which his ability did not really earn. Shays had been a captain in the Revolution, and seems to have been a good recruiting officer. He was, however, quite incompetent for leadership, and spent, apparently, more time in excusing himself than in trying to justify his cause. He was far more respectable, however, than were Shattuck, Parsons and most of the other leaders whose names have sunk into deserved oblivion.

Meanwhile, the General Court had come together at Boston. Stiffened by the pronounced loyalty of that city, by the comparative vigor of the Governor, and by fear for its own existence, it proceeded to enact some really wise and dignified legislation.

It passed a riot act, involving confiscation of property, whipping and imprisonment; and on the other hand an act of indemnity to those who would take the oath of allegiance before the end of the year; a judiciary act extending the powers of justices of the peace, thereby reducing the cost of suits of law; an impost and excise tariff intended to relieve in

some measure the burden of direct taxation; and a measure for the sale by lottery of the public lands in Maine. After a long conflict between the democratic house and the aristocratic senate, it also temporarily suspended the writ of *Habeas Corpus*. It did not, much to its credit, give in to the popular clamor for paper money, although it passed a temporary tender act; and, best of all, it issued an Address to the People, in which the political and economic situation was explained and justified in a really masterly manner. This address was to be read in all the churches on Thanksgiving Day. In short, by word and by deed the legislature supported the Governor and the militia in all that they had done.

No sooner, however, had the General Court adjourned, just before Thanksgiving, than it became evident that both its strength as shown in its coercive laws and its supposed weakness as shown in the bill of amnesty, had but served more fully to inflame the people. Conventions of the towns immediately met, framing new grievances and accusing the legislature of lack of understanding of and sympathy with the populace; the courts were again stopped, or forced to adjourn; and scarcely a rioter condescended to avail himself of the privilege of pardon. It is little exaggeration to say that, throughout December, the State, west of Middlesex county, was practically in the possession of the mob. The insurrection in Middlesex, however, had been absolutely broken up by the high sheriff who, sup-

ported by a Boston troop of light horse under Col. Hichborn and another from Groton under Col. Wood, had captured Shattuck and the other leaders and had clapped them into Suffolk jail.

Shays, meanwhile, had taken up his headquarters at Rutland, 12 miles from Worcester, in some barracks of the Revolution (probably those in which the prisoners from Burgoyne's army were so long confined, and the well for which still exists) and there General Rufus Putnam frequently visited him, trying, in vain, to turn him from the error of his ways. From this hill-top, Shays and his followers, made more desperate by the unusual severity of the winter and the inhospitality of the Rutland folk, kept pouncing upon Worcester; and he became at last so menacing that the sheriff declared himself powerless to protect the December sitting of the court, which was therefore ordered adjourned to January. Moreover, Shays repeatedly threatened to march upon Boston and rescue Shattuck, urging the disaffected everywhere to meet him there. This stirred Boston to the depths, placed her for some weeks under martial rule, with sentries in her streets and cannon upon Fort Hill, and impelled the Governor to make real preparations for stamping out what was now seen to be serious and widespread rebellion. As commander-in-chief, he ordered 4,400 militia to take the field for 30 days, placed General Benjamin Lincoln in command of them, and made certain their pay and sustenance,—the state treasury being empty and its credit *nil*,—by loans from public-



spirited citizens.\*

In addition to ordering out the militia, Governor Bowdoin publicly besought the aid of the people in restoring order, and privately, through General Knox, the Secretary of War, arranged for the intervention of the Federal Government. So jealous were the states, however, of such interference, that the Congress had to mask its purpose by calling for troops to serve against the North-West Indians.

General Lincoln's little army rendezvoused at Roxbury on January 19, 1787, and, marching immediately to Worcester, reached there on the 22d, effectively protecting the sitting of the courts. For Shays, knowing the militia to be on the march, had shifted his ground to Springfield, where he hoped to gain possession of the government arsenal. He appeared there in force on the day that Lincoln reached Worcester. In command at Springfield was General Shepard, whom Shays' forces had earlier, as will be remembered, bloodlessly encountered. Under Shepard, however, were but 1100 militia, while against him were now arrayed not only Shays' 1100 insurgents on the east of the city, but also 400 more under Day, on the west, and at least 400 more from Berkshire, under Eli

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\*A curious side-light is thrown upon this matter of the state's credit by the fact that Jacob Kuhn, the custodian, or janitor, of the State House, could secure wood for the winter's session of the legislature only by pledging his personal credit, none being willing to trust the State itself.



Parsons, on the north. On the 24th, Shays notified Day that he proposed to attack General Shepard on the following morning, and asked for Day's coöperation. Whether Day was really not ready, or whether he hoped to capture Shepard all by himself, does not appear. But he returned answer to Shays that he could not fight until the 26th. This letter, fortunately for the militia, was intercepted. Shays came in on the 25th, therefore, fully expecting Day to appear from the opposite side of the city, in his support.

As Shays' forces approached the arsenal, Shepard sent him formal warning that he would be fired upon did he continue to advance. This producing no effect, Shepard ordered his one field piece (familiarily known as the "government's puppy") to be fired above the heads of the insurgents. But still they marched steadily forward until within a hundred and fifty yards of the militia. Therefore, performing, as he afterwards said, the hardest duty that was ever his, Shepard ordered the gun trained full upon these deluded men, many of whom had been his tried comrades throughout the Revolution. But this bitter medicine was what the social disease of rebellion needed. Screaming "murder" and leaving three men dead and one mortally wounded, Shays' army fled, and in such disorder that had not the militia general been as temperate as he was firm, he might have slaughtered the greater part of it. For another anxious day he guarded the arsenal, expecting every moment the approach of the united forces of Shays, Day and Parsons; but on the second

morning relief came. Lincoln's little army appeared and took command of the city, while Shepard's force went up the river to scatter the already demoralized rebels. From point to point he drove them, until Shays and his remnant of revolt made a stand upon one of the high hills of Pelham.

In the meantime the news of Shepard's alarming position had reached Middlesex, and 2000 militia, under General Brooks, had been ordered to his relief; but they had gone only a few miles when news of the rout of Shays returned them, reluctant at losing the chance to fight, to their homes.

Following up the victory at Springfield, General Lincoln invested—if one may use so large a term—Shays' force at Pelham, and summoned him to surrender in a letter so admirable and so rarely terse, as to rank as a State Paper:

\* "Whether you are convinced or not of your error in flying to arms, I am fully persuaded that before this hour, you must have the fullest conviction upon your own minds, that you are not able to execute your original purposes.

"Your resources are few, your force is inconsiderable, and hourly decreasing from the disaffection of your men; you are in a post where you have neither cover nor supplies, and in a situation in which you can neither give aid to your friends, nor discomfort to the supporters of good order and government. . . . Under these circumstances, you

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\*Minot's "History of the Insurrections," Worcester, 1788; P. 118.

cannot hesitate a moment to disband your deluded followers. If you should not, I must approach, and apprehend the most influential characters among you. Should you attempt to fire upon the troops of government, the consequences must be fatal to many of your men the least guilty. To prevent bloodshed, you will communicate to your privates, that if they will instantly lay down their arms, surrender themselves to government, and take and subscribe the oath of allegiance to this Commonwealth, they shall be recommended to the General Court for mercy. If you should either withhold this information from them, or suffer your people to fire upon our approach, you must be answerable for all the ills which may exist in consequence thereof."

Shays' letter in reply "bade defiance," as a contemporary remarked, "alike to government, to grammar and to spelling." He asked for time, on the ground that petitions for redress and pardon had been despatched to the General Court. Under cover of a parley, however, he withdrew his men to Petersham, where, seemingly, quarters and supplies were more plenty than at Pelham. General Lincoln, who was then at Hadley, heard a rumor of this change of base at three o'clock on February 3rd. The rumor was not confirmed, however, until six; and his army could not be got under way till eight. The evening was warm; but about midnight came up a New England northeast wind, with driving snow and piercing frost. In a country devoid, as this then was, of shelter, the only hope of life lay in keeping on the march. So Lincoln's little army,

suffering horribly, kept on, covered the whole thirty miles, over snow-piled roads, in thirteen hours, and arrived at Petersham, with every man more or less frost-bitten and not a few left frozen on the way, at nine the next morning. Shays' men, well housed, well fed, might easily have destroyed this wretched company; but, utterly taken by surprise, they simply fled, leaving their good quarters and their steaming rations for their enemy's relief. This dramatic and truly heroic march saw the real end of the Rebellion; though, as in all such contests, the mob, broken up into small parties, growing more and more desperate, more and more forgetful of the difference (if there be any) between warfare and brigandage, continued to harass western Massachusetts for many a month to come. Indeed the greatest loss of life on both sides and the most serious battle of all—that of Sheffield, in Berkshire County—took place after Shays' flight from Petersham; but these were isolated riots, not organized rebellion, and involved no serious menace to the state's authority.

The leaders and many of the rank and file fled, under General Lincoln's active pursuit, to the surrounding states; and a most amusing correspondence, throwing a flood of light upon interstate jealousies, took place between Governor Bowdoin and their several Governors. Connecticut and New Hampshire, (the latter having had a serious insurrection of her own) coöperated willingly with Massachusetts, treating her renegades as their outlaws too. New York, however, always arrogantly

self-sufficient, would take no decided stand until the insurgents began to make trouble within her own borders; when she promptly came over and did good service in the Berkshire riots. Rhode Island (or, as she was then always called by her loving sister states, *Rogue's Island*) openly rejoiced in our discomfiture and elected one of our worst rioters to her legislature. The Governor of Vermont, after circumlocution worthy of the Empress Dowager of China, finally declared that he would take no harsh action against our refugees who had sought shelter in his state, because he "could not afford to discourage immigration."

This scattered rebellion was thus long kept up, partly with the desperation of men who know themselves to be outlaws and who rather enjoy the license which it gives; partly in hope of frightening the citizens into redressing their alleged grievances; partly in the belief that the change of government which is almost sure to follow disorder might spare their threatened necks. In this last expectation they were, as any student of democratic institutions knows, quite fully justified. For Governor Bowdoin and his associates had put down rebellion; but they had ruined their political careers. Their harsh measures had been effective, but, of course, not popular. Bowdoin had never been really acceptable save in Boston; and, besides taking, finally, strong steps to smother insurrection, he had vetoed a popular measure,—that for reducing his own salary. He based his veto on constitutional grounds; but this act destroyed whatever popularity

he before possessed. Therefore, in the early spring of 1787, Hancock decided that the time had come to recover from his painful illnesses; and in the belief, which he took pains not to discourage, that he would cure the social distresses of the time, he was overwhelmingly elected, over Bowdoin, to the governorship. With Hancock came in also another almost untried House of Representatives, men believed to be more favorable to the popular cause.

Both to the old and to the new legislature fell a hard and thankless task: that of dealing with once trusted citizens who had been in open revolt. And as was to be expected, both made equally sorry work of it. Prudence warned them to be lenient; fear impelled them to be stern; so they were first too stern and then, frightened by popular clamor, too lenient. Very elaborate acts of disqualification were passed, but it does not appear that, in the end any one was really disqualified from the rights of citizenship. Fourteen persons were convicted of treason and were sentenced to death; but the only individual who seems to have had anything happen to him was a member of the House of Representatives who was actually made to sit upon the gallows with a rope around his neck and to pay a fine of 50 pounds. All the rest, even Shays, Day, Parsons, Wheeler and Shattuck, either were pardoned or were allowed to live undisturbed in some state across the border. Shays died, many years later and in great poverty, at Sparta, N. Y.

So with ever lessening echoes of scattered disorder, ended the greatest rebellion against her au-



thority that our commonwealth has ever seen. In this day of large things, the debts which were its fundamental cause seem as trivial as the petty fights which marked its course. But if one projects himself into that time of small things and rids himself of his present knowledge of what this state and what democracy have done, this event then becomes as portentous to us as it was to the statesmen of the time. To them a million dollars was enormous; they saw the mountain of debt, but could not dream of the resources beyond; they had proclaimed a republic, but had no assurance from history that a democracy such as this could hold together for ten years; they had still to work out the vast fabric of the constitution; they had as yet no finance, no trade, practically no manufactures. Thus naked of resources and of political experience, what wonder that many of them saw in the Shays Rebellion the opening scene of general anarchy, the preface to an utter downfall of democracy. Changing thus our view-point, we too see what a crisis in the history not only of Massachusetts but of the nation this Shays Rebellion was, and we wonder, not that our great-grandfathers made so many mistakes in handling it, but that they made so few. Perhaps we are ready, too, to agree with him who called the quelling of the Shays Rebellion one of "the twelve great campaigns of history."

This Rebellion taught our forefathers at least two things: first, that the states must bind themselves together by some stronger bond than the Articles of Confederation; second, that they must deal stern-



ly with disobedience to organic law. Said Samuel Adams, in opposing pardon to the convicted leaders of the insurrection: "In monarchies, the crime of treason and rebellion may admit of being pardoned; but the man who dares to rebel against the laws of a republic *ought* to suffer death." That first lesson which the state and the country learned hastened, without a doubt, the adoption of the Constitution; and that second lesson has been slowly teaching our lawmakers to make ever wiser distinctions between *liberty*, a social good which cannot be too widely extended, and *license*, a social ill which cannot be too sternly repressed.

VI

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE URSULINE CONVENT  
AT CHARLESTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS, 1834

**R**ELIGIOUS riot in Boston within living memory seems, in these days of toleration, almost incredible. To a disbelief at the time in the possibility of such a disaster and to a failure, therefore, to take proper precautions, the burning of the Ursuline Convent in Charlestown, on the night of August 11, 1834, was mainly due. But the frenzy of the mob and the supineness of the onlookers had a deeper origin still in that general law which so often controls the acts of mankind, the Law of Crowds. This law—of which Gustave Le Bon has given so excellent a demonstration—causes men in masses to act either much worse or much better than they would as individuals. Over and over again history has shown that when a number of persons are gathered together, whether in an ordinary mob, a convention, a legislative assembly, or an audience of any kind; or when otherwise unrelated persons are held together by political, religious or social beliefs, forming them into parties, sects or castes,—the action of men so formed into a crowd is in many cases entirely different from what one's experience of them as individuals would lead one to expect. Shielded and made nameless by surrounding numbers the individual loses his fear of con-

sequences, his sense of accountability, in no small degree his individuality itself. Thus transformed, he becomes, as it were, but an atom in the crowd-mass, moving as it moves, feeling as it feels, acting as it acts. The higher powers of the man, those of reason and judgment, give place to the lower ones, those of instinct and emotion; and these instincts and emotions, acting and reacting one upon another, are intensified sometimes to a pitch of frenzy, so that persons who, under ordinary conditions, are sober, law-abiding and cautious in behavior, will, in a crowd, commit acts of heroism or of brutality seemingly impossible. Whether their deeds be heroic or bestial depends wholly upon the direction in which their instincts and emotions are impelled. For a crowd is swayed in one or all of three ways: by a dramatic event; by a fixed idea which has been built up through years or even through generations; or by an individual who has power of emotional leadership. To one or all of these things a crowd will yield itself much as the hypnotized patient yields to the hypnotizer; and, under the suggestions of that idea or leader or event, will go to almost any length of sublimity or infamy. Such a crowd will march undismayed against an overwhelming foe, will slaughter its dearest friends, will endure fatigues impossible to individuals, will do deeds utterly abhorrent under usual conditions to most of those who commit them. Nothing is too extravagant for a crowd to accept as fact, no revulsion of feeling under a new impulse is too immense for it to experience, no refinement of cruelty or, on the other

hand, no height of heroism is too tremendous for such a crowd to indulge in. But in none of these things, good or bad, does it exhibit reason. This was well exemplified in the notorious Charlestown mob of 1834.

In that year Boston differed almost more from the Boston of to-day than it did from that of 1634. It was still, to all intents and purposes, a village, cut off from the rest of the world by seas, isolated from its sister cities by feebleness of transportation. Its population was still practically homogeneous and of the Puritan type. It still viewed Popery with the hatred of the days of the Gunpowder Plot, still looked upon foreigners with eyes not very different from those with which the Chinese, not without reason, regard the "foreign devil" to-day.

The population of the entire United States was only about fourteen millions, that of Boston scarcely forty thousand; and what is now the Charlestown District was then an independent town. But the development of railroads, coupled with political and social distresses in Ireland, had brought new problems into the lives of this chosen people of Puritan Yankees. The demand for laborers had attracted what seemed in those days a vast number of foreigners, mainly Irish, and their coming had created the necessity for the Roman Catholic religion, a demand which the zealous leaders of that faith are never slow in meeting. Thousands of Catholics had, within a few years, come to the city, and they were ministered to by two churches: the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, on Franklin Street,

and a smaller church in Charlestown. To the less intelligent portion of this homogeneous little city, here were two portentous things: imported labor, and the vanguard of the Pope of Rome. More significant, the two new things seemed to have close relation.

Meanwhile, the Catholic Order of St. Ursula, a sisterhood vowed to the giving of religious and secular instruction, had established, in 1820, a convent in a small building next to the Cathedral; and so well did these nuns prosper that in 1826 they removed to a larger building at the foot of Mt. Benedict (then at the extreme limit of Charlestown, now a part of Somerville) and began the erection of a large convent on the top of the hill itself, in the midst of an estate of twelve acres. A minor cause of offence was that they were enabled to do this largely through the generosity of a converted Protestant, a Mr. Thayer. In 1828 the new building was occupied, and a conspicuous and imposing one it must have been. The main house was fully eighty feet long, three stories high, with a pitched roof, a large dormer, and a cupola; and on either side it had wings, a story less in height, extended back to enclose a paved courtyard. The whole was of brick and, with its grounds elaborately terraced, with gardens and bowers and greenhouses, with a farmhouse, barn and other out-buildings, and with a view embracing on one side the whole Boston basin with its flanking hills, and on the other the harbor and the sea, the institution must have indeed been, as its circular asserted, "an extensive establishment

. . . commanding one of the most beautiful prospects in the United States."

The course of study which the Convent offered was no less elaborate than the building. "All the attainments" were to be got there—to quote again from the circular—"which may be found necessary, useful and ornamental in society." The young ladies in the Junior Department (the juniors and seniors being inexorably kept apart) had to content themselves with the common branches and plain and fancy needlework; but no sooner did they enter the Senior Department than they had spread before their minds, according to the prospectus, "Plain and ornamental writing; Composition, both in prose and poetry; ancient, modern and natural History; Chronology; Mythology; and the use of the Globes; Astronomy; Rhetoric; Logic; Natural and Moral Philosophy; Chemistry, Arithmetic; Geometry; and Botany; every kind of useful and ornamental Needlework; Japanning; Drawing in all its varieties; Painting on Velvet, Satin and Wood; and the beautiful style of Mezzotinto and Poonah Painting." Music with different instruments and dancing were also taught, the latter by the original Papanti; and this feast of arts and sciences was capped, in the last quarter, and at an added charge of twenty dollars, with cookery.

We may smile at this formidable list and wonder how five women could impart so much in so short a space of time; but it was the English fashion of that day, and many a day after, for the accomplished young lady to do all things—most of them very

badly; and there seems every reason to believe that the overworked Sisters of St. Ursula, mainly Irish ladies, were accomplished and well taught. In this school on Mt. Benedict was offered, therefore, a training very rare in the New England of that time.

Absolute regularity of hours was enforced by the Convent bell, from the early rising at half past five to the early retiring at half past seven. The day was well filled with tasks—not the long list of the prospectus, but the common branches, together with drawing, writing, lettering, sewing, embroidery, music and other accomplishments thought essential to the well bred girl of eighty years ago. The school rooms were small, with square boxes placed regularly around them, and with one or more tables in the centre. On the boxes the pupils sat, their backs, in the good old fashion, unsupported; and in the boxes were kept their books. On fine afternoons the girls did much of their working, and some playing, out of doors, a nun always with them, not to repress them, but, on the contrary, to take a lively and childlike interest in their most trivial doings. The meals, eaten in silence, were plain but wholesome: always an abundance of good bread, sometimes with butter, sometimes with sauce, never with both; plenty of fresh milk; tea or coffee made innocuously weak; meat once a day, excepting, of course, on Fridays; vegetables from the Convent farm; and occasionally a plain pudding. The uniform of the girls was a gray bombazet with caps of blue, save on Sunday, when white was permitted, and on certain great days,



when a pink sash might decorate the white.

The supreme event of the school year was Coronation Day. Then parents and friends for the only time were admitted to the schoolrooms, the prizes of the year awarded, a gold and silver medal given, and the two best girls of the year crowned with artificial wreaths (white for the senior and pink for the junior) and seated upon thrones to the sound of a coronation song. One stanza of this will perhaps suffice:

“Proceed, fair Queens, to your fond homes;  
Give joy unto that sacred dome;  
Return to be a Father’s pride,  
The stay of a fond Mother’s side.  
Long may your welcome’s echo sound,  
And grateful words be heard around.  
Long may your virtues breathe on earth,  
Long breathe the odour of your worth.”

Then followed the one feast of the year, at which the nuns vied with one another in producing elaborately indigestible dishes, whose secrets they had learned in the French convents of their younger days.

The pupils of this Ursuline house on Mt. Benedict, averaging about seventy in number, were mainly the daughters of wealthy Protestants. Most of the girls bore names distinguished in Boston and its vicinity: but a few—and these were generally the only Catholics—came from regions so widely separate as Canada and the West Indies. Beyond attendance upon morning prayers, and mass on Sun-

days, the Protestants were required to take part in no religious exercises, nor was the slightest attempt made to convert any to the Romanist faith. This point was so hotly disputed at the time, and afterwards, that it is most valuable to have direct testimony from Protestant ladies who were pupils at the Convent, declaring that, while good morals were constantly instilled by the sisters, the subject of religion was never broached by them. The Protestant pupils were not simply permitted, they were required, to take their own Bibles to the church services, and were urged to read from them during the saying of the mass. One of these ladies states, further, that never were more perfect gentlewomen than the sisters, and that not once in her long residence did she see them out of temper or wanting in sweet patience. Notwithstanding—or perhaps because of—this serenity of disposition and the absence of severe punishments, the discipline among the pupils was extraordinarily good. Their greatest transgression, which brought its own swift punishment, was the stealing and eating of raw turnips from the Convent garden.

The Mother Superior, a French-Irish woman, did no teaching, her time being more than occupied with a general oversight of the establishment. She was little seen, therefore, by the pupils, unless they were sent to her for admonition. Mild as her punishments were, her extraordinary dignity of manner seems to have made an astonishing impression, so that the smile or frown of an Eastern potentate could not have been more momentous. This regal

attitude and habit of mind, coupled with an ignorance of the world in general and of the Yankee world in particular, made that secular intercourse which, as Superior, it was her duty to carry on, not entirely successful. Mother St. George (that being her religious name) lacked tact; she despised her neighbors, the brick-making *canaille*, mostly worthy men from New Hampshire, who hated Popery and all its works; and she had little patience, although she paid them promptly, with the heretic trades-people and town officials of Charlestown.

The winter of 1833-34 was one of extraordinary religious revival in New England. The active and fervent Protestant preachers of Boston and its vicinity seized the fruitful occasion to denounce Popery. Dr. Lyman Beecher, especially, in a series of lectures, seems to have hurled all the thunderbolts of his eloquence against the Catholic Church so rapidly taking root in Protestant America. These zealous pastors can scarcely have refrained from pointing their words by directing a warning finger towards this prosperous house set conspicuously on a hill and holding within its walls the daughters of so many Protestants. At the same time, the laborers and mechanics were not slow to denounce the Irish Papists, seeking and securing the work that belonged of right to the natives, and to imagine all manner of Jesuitical plots in this rapidly increasing influx of foreign Catholics. Moreover, the pupils of the Convent themselves, very properly forbidden to enter that part of the house reserved to the use of the nuns, imagined, with schoolgirl readiness,

many mysteries, which, told outside the school, grew with repetition into startling tales. So from all sides the law of the crowd was slowly working, and the minds of the people were being brought into a widespread state of suspicion, ready for hypnotic leading to almost any lengths.

The first incident to attract general attention was the alleged escape of Rebecca Theresa Reed. She was an ignorant but imaginative young person, whom much reading of romances had made yearn for the life of a nun. Taken into Mt. Benedict as a servant, she was soon disenchanted, and ran away. This she did by breaking through lattices and climbing a high fence, although the carriage gate of the Convent grounds stood wide open. The Mother Superior happened to witness this melodramatic flight, and called several of the sisters and pupils to the window "to see Miss Reed run away." This girl's romantic imagination and the credulity of certain of her friends created marvelous revelations of ill-treatment and wrongdoing at the Convent, revelations which passed from ear to ear, ever amplified as they traveled, and which, after the destruction of the Convent, were published under the title, "Six Months in a Convent," producing much excitement and controversy. In this book—which was written for her—Miss Reed made charges of forcible proselyting and of an intended abduction of herself to St. Louis; but these charges were woven into such a tissue of false and improbable statements, that it is charitable to suppose her to have been a neurotic who, by her imaginings and repeti-

tion of them to others, brought herself into a state of actual belief. While it is impossible flatly to confute her statements, there is the strongest internal evidence against them, the simple fact that she alone saw and experienced these dreadful things being enough to disprove them in a court of law. However, her stories made a vast impression, especially as they were met, on the part of the Mother Superior, with the contemptuous and violent language which she almost habitually used towards too zealous Protestants.

A trivial incident—the ordering off the Convent grounds by the porter, the popular story asserting with violence and the setting on of the Convent dog, of some ladies who had attempted to cross them, and the subsequent drubbing of the porter by a brick-maker, Buzzell, afterwards one of the leaders of the riot—did not tend to improve the strained relations between the Superior and her neighbors; and on July 28 occurred a sensational affair which seemed to confirm the stories of the eloped Miss Reed and to prove this imposing building on Mt. Benedict a veritable Bastille.

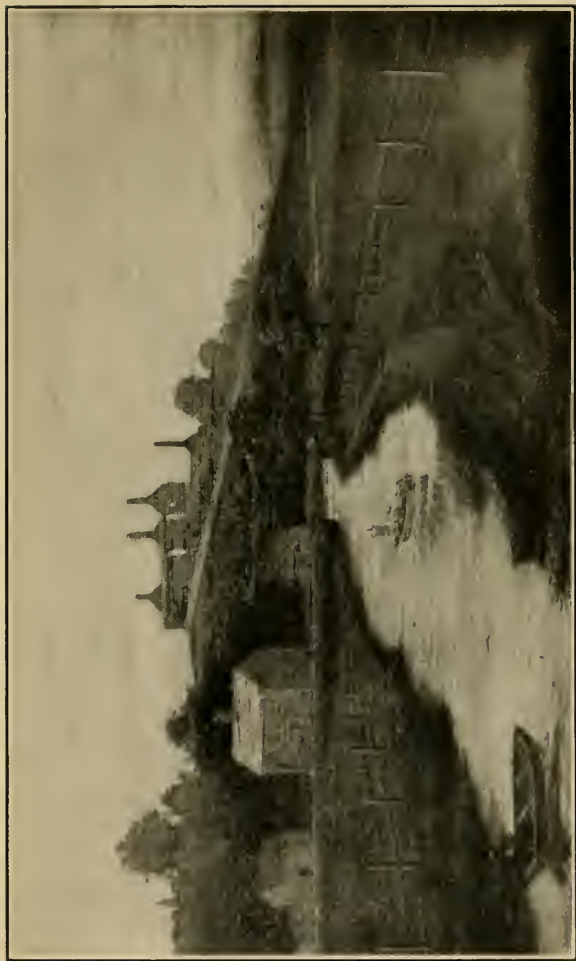
A large share of the labor of preparing for the Coronation Day of 1834 had fallen upon the Mother Assistant, Sister Mary John, the teacher of music. It is stated that for a long period she had to give no less than fourteen lessons of at least forty-five minutes each a day. This tax upon her nerves resulted, naturally, in brain fever. In delirium she escaped from the Convent, sought refuge with its nearest neighbor, a Mr. Cutter, and was by him sent to

what was then West Cambridge, to the house of Mr. Cotting, two of whose daughters had been pupils at the nunnery.

A night's rest under the tender care of the Cottings restored Miss Harrison (for such was her worldly name), and on the next day, at her own earnest wish, she was taken back to the Convent. But the ravings of this nun while in delirium, her appeals for aid, and the not unnatural perturbation of the Mother Superior and the Bishop over her flight, gave rise to most dreadful rumors. Here, then, was the striking incident needful to compel the attention of the community and to carry out the law of crowds. At once this poor sister was dubbed the "Mysterious Lady," and the wildest stories of her ill-treatment and sufferings found immediate and unqualified belief. In the popular mind the building on Mt. Benedict became a very labyrinth of dungeons, crowded with instruments of torture, and every iniquity associated with the most corrupt periods of the church was fastened upon this quiet institution.

Within ten days after the return of Sister Mary John to the Convent, rumors of her imprisonment, of her secret removal to more horrid dungeons, even of her torturing and murder by being buried alive, had attained extravagant proportions. The Boston daily papers added fuel to the flame by publishing these rumors, without comment, but without the slightest investigation as to their probability.

To quiet the public agitation, Mr. Cutter, in whose house Sister Mary John in her delirium had



RUINS OF THE CHARLESTOWN CONVENT WITH OLD MIDDLESEX  
CANAL IN FOREGROUND





first taken refuge, called at the Convent on Saturday, August 9, saw the now convalescent nun, and was by her informed, with lamentations over the trouble into which she had brought the sisterhood, that she was entirely at liberty to leave the Convent at any time, but that she had not the slightest wish to do so. This gentleman agreed, therefore, to publish over his signature the true facts regarding this so-called "Mysterious Lady" in the Boston papers of Monday morning. Unfortunately, in those sleepy days of journalism, his statement did not appear till Tuesday.

Meanwhile the selectmen of Charlestown, bestirring themselves, had arranged thoroughly to inspect the Convent; and on the afternoon of Monday, the eleventh, they visited the building. If we are to trust the account of Mrs. Whitney, in her book, "The Burning of the Convent," these officials were met with upbraiding from the Superior and with jeers from the pupils; but according to their own published statement, which did not, of course, appear until Tuesday, the twelfth, "they were conducted by the lady in question" (Sister Mary John) "throughout the premises, and into every apartment of the place, the whole of which is in good order, and nothing appearing to them to be in the least objectionable; and they have the satisfaction to assure the public that there exists no cause of complaint on the part of said female, as she expresses herself to be entirely satisfied with her present situation, it being that of her own choice, and that she has no desire or wish to alter it."

Whatever fault one may find with the English of this statement, it was explicit; but it came too late,—would have been too late even had it appeared on the morning of the fatal day. The law of the mob had done its work, reason had departed from the hypnotized mind of the community, and imagination, running riot, had built up a fabric more lasting than was to be the “beautiful edifice” upon Mt. Benedict.

For, during those early August days, the “Boston Truckmen” and other organized bodies had been holding secret meetings. From them, or from other sources, had come inflammatory circulars denouncing Catholicism in general and the nunnery in particular. Destruction of the Convent building was openly threatened; and rumors of a most alarming nature flew about the city. A procession of parents and friends, therefore, visited the Superior all day on Monday. Not one of them, however, thought it necessary to remove the pupils, all agreeing that a mob in the vicinity of staid old Boston in the nineteenth century was something not to be thought of. These visits, the continual requests for a sight of Sister Mary John, the inspection by the selectmen, seem to have electrified the atmosphere of the sleepy Convent with a new and pleasurable excitement rather than with fear. So un-wonted was the bustle, that soon after their early going to bed the pupils in their several dormitories were fast asleep.

Towards ten o'clock this sleep was broken by sudden and fearful howls. The much talked of

mob had really come, having swept in comparative silence out from Boston over the Charlestown bridge. It was as yet small in size and wholly irresolute; but, wakened by its onward rush and shouting, the pupils, already in a state of tension, were at once thrown into a fever of excitement, most of them screaming, not a few falling in hysterics and some in a dead faint. The poor nuns—always excepting the Mother Superior, who never faltered or flinched throughout that fearful night—were in little better case than the children, one of them going off into convulsive fits, Sister Mary John, the innocent immediate cause of the disaster, again losing her shaken wits, and a novice, far advanced in consumption and who died within a few days from shock, remaining all night as one already dead.

For two hours the mob did little except to hurl blasphemous and indecent threats against the nunnery, defying the Superior to come out, and calling upon her to show them the "Mysterious Lady" imprisoned in the dungeons of the Convent. Little of this, fortunately, reached the ears of the children, for the dormitories were at the back of the building; but the nuns, cowering in the unlighted front rooms, heard it all; and the Mother Superior, chafing more and more under the horrible insults, could at last be no longer restrained. Breaking away from the weeping sisters, she flung wide the middle door—*that* door which only she and the Bishop had a right to use—and faced the mob. Had she understood the fickleness of crowds, had

she known the power that a woman of her courage has, had she appreciated that sight and sound of poor Mary John, even in her distraught condition, would have set at rest the rumors at least of murder, she might at that eleventh hour have saved her community. But she met that cursing mob with a violence only less than their own, calling them vagabonds, drunkards, *canaille*, exciting their worst suspicions by positively refusing to produce the sister, and threatening them, in language she had already used to Mr. Cutter, that "if they did not immediately disperse, Bishop Fenwick had ten thousand Irishmen at his back, who would sweep them all into the sea." No combination of words could have been more ill-timed. This threat was immediately answered by two pistol shots, which going wide of their mark, resulted both in a temporary sobering of the mob and in a forced retreat of the Superior, dragged back into the house by her terrified subordinates.

For some time yet the mob hesitated, prowling about, muttering and cursing; then, of a sudden it swept off down the hill, and the mercurial children became frantic with the joy of relief,—but only for a short time. Soon they hear a tearing and cracking, as the crowd pull down the Convent fences; soon they see first a flickering and then a flaming, as huge bonfires, richly fed with tar barrels, shoot up, revealing the rioters, some of them fantastically disguised, dancing like madmen in rings about the flames.

Whether or not preconcerted, these bonfires set

on that lofty hill attract within a short time a multitude of people. They attract, too, the primitive fire engine of Charlestown and the newly-created fire department of Boston. The former firemen, after some parley with the rioters, go, like the king of France, down the hill again; the latter remain (and probably their contention that they took no part in the assault of the Convent was justified), but do nothing to save the threatened property, being completely paralyzed by the mob spirit. At that time, and even much later, a few resolute men, all testimony goes to show, could easily have dispersed the rioters; but, as we have seen, the firemen did nothing; one selectman raised a feeble voice, but having weak eyes, too weak to recognize any of the rioters, soon went home and to bed; and a great crowd of ordinarily respectable citizens, who, there is no doubt, were spectators of the scene, contented themselves with watching from afar, the word "mob" and the hypnotism of the situation wholly quenching their collective courage.

Probably at this point a powerful sustainer of mobs in the shape of a barrel of rum was brought and distributed. Made brave by this, the body of one or two hundred men, with brands from the fires, again surged up the hill like savages. Armed with bricks and stones, deaf to all thought of reason, possessed by an animal hunger for destruction, they began, shortly after midnight, this most outrageous assault upon a house occupied solely by ten feeble women and fifty terror-stricken children. Never, certainly in the history of New England, has there

been a more cowardly performance. Bad as some others of our mobs have been, their fury was at least directed against men, possessing some power of resistance and retaliation.

The character of the band which made this courageous charge is quite well sampled, so to speak, by the thirteen men who by the efforts of the "Faneuil Hall committee" subsequently were arrested and put on trial. The mob seems to have been made up of Boston laborers and mechanics, who, intending merely to intimidate the Irish by a demonstration against this Catholic house, were led by the crowd-fever into unexpected violence; of brick yard employees who had personal grudges against the Convent and its Superior; of ignorant and prurient-minded men whose imaginations had been inflamed by foulest stories of monastic corruption; of friends of Theresa Reed, who seems to have had power to rouse a bitter championship; of bigots who thought to do religion a service by destroying one of its homes; of Irish Protestants, who are proverbially unfriendly to their Catholic brethren; of petty criminals and law-breakers, always present where there is prospect of disorder; and, finally, of thoughtless boys, who were there for fun. But, by the mob-spirit, all these men and boys were brought down to one common level of brute destructiveness.

The first impulse of the Superior when she saw these demons coming, as she no doubt believed, to kill her, was to invoke the only shadow of law she had within her reach. With pitiable faith in the power of magistracy, she thrust out from an upper



window the daughter of a Cambridge judge, bidding her warn the mob—which, however, was quite heedless of her—that her father would put them all in prison. This poor weapon failing of effect, the Superior, marshalling the children in their customary two-by-two, started toward the barred front door, thinking, perhaps, that a sight of this terror-stricken flock might move the mob to pity. But this modern martyrdom of St. Ursula was not to be. Just as Mother St. George reached the middle landing there came a tremendous shower of stones, breaking all the windows of the lower story and giving access to the Superior's office. Fortunately for her, this room contained much of value, including a large sum of money; and while the mob stopped to pillage, she had time to take her flock of nuns and children down a back stairway and out into the paved court, leading them thence into the Convent garden. This garden, luckily, was cut off from the front of the building by high fences. It was, therefore, quite deserted, and the poor fugitives could patter unmolested, and in trembling silence, to the vicinity of the Convent tomb, a large brick structure which the zeal of the searching selectmen had caused to be opened, and in which, doubtless, the Superior intended to stand at bay.

What an experience for those terrified women and children, crouching in that silent garden on that hot August night! On the one side, the half-opened tomb, more terrible to most of them than the rioters themselves; on the other the gloomy building, lighted at first dimly and fitfully, as a few of the

rioters with lanterns and firebrands sought plunder through the upper rooms, and then more brightly, as the mass of the mob, having searched the cellars in vain for dungeons and instruments of torture, mounted from floor to floor, smashing the furniture, tearing down the curtains, shivering the mirrors, throwing the combustibles into great heaps, and flinging the solidier articles, even pianos and harps, out through the crashing windows; and over all the late-rising moon flung weird tree-shadows, while the blazing tar barrels made of the hilltop a huge beacon, reflected and multiplied a hundred times in a wide circle of glowing brick-kilns.

So long as plunder and the work of destruction should keep the mob in the building, its fugitive occupants were safe; but the rioters still howled for the Superior, still searched fitfully for the body of the "Mysterious Lady," and must soon look systematically for both. At this critical time—for even had the nuns not been paralyzed with terror, it would have been impossible for them to get the fifty or sixty children over the high board fence which, shutting the world out, shut also the fugitives in—Mr. Cutter, the neighbor who had already figured so prominently, came again to the rescue. He and the men with him broke through the fence, and, partly through this opening and partly by lifting them over the high palings, got all the nuns and such of the pupils as had not escaped in other directions out of the garden and down the hill to the Cutter house. Here the testimony is very conflict-

ing. It is asserted, on the one hand, that the fugitives remained in this house until it seemed imperative for them to seek a more distant shelter; on the other, that the Superior refused to enter Mr. Cutter's house at all, and started across the mile of dreary clay flats towards Winter Hill, dragging her tired charges after her. Whatever the facts as to his residence, it is certain that Mr. Cutter insisted upon going with them thence to find some safe asylum. So this strange procession struck across the fields among the brick yards, Sister Mary John striding ahead, muttering and gesticulating; the stronger nuns half dragging, half carrying, the dying novice; the Superior, stout and scant of breath, always commanding a slower pace; and the weeping, weary children, in every state of undress, some with little more than their nightgowns, others with their entire wardrobe upon their backs, huddling behind; the whole scene illuminated by the huge torch of the Convent building, now a mass of flames.

How Mr. Cutter went from door to door of his friends, knocking in vain at the seemingly empty houses; how the good Mr. and Mrs. Adams, with hospitality, but with deadly fear for their own lives, took them all in; how the former, with astonishing presence of mind and histrionic ability, threw the rioters—who soon followed, hounding the Superior—off the scent by feigning to have just awakened; and how, as daylight came, the friends of the fugitives, guided by Mr. Cutter, came to the rescue of the nuns and children, is too long a story.

What could have been the journalistic enterprise

of that day, which produced nothing more, the next morning, than a few lines of bald statement about the burning of the Convent? But the news traveled faster than the newspapers; and before the day was over, Faneuil Hall, that safety valve of Boston, had seen a monster mass meeting, at which distinguished men, including the eloquent Harrison Gray Otis, spoke in no measured terms, and a notable committee, headed by Mayor Lyman, was appointed to bring the ringleaders of the mob to justice. Mass meetings were held also in Cambridge, Charlestown, and other towns; the militia was called out to guard Catholic property; and bodies of citizens, under arms, patrolled the streets for a week, ready to prevent new outrages. For it had been shown that even sober Boston could have a mob; and there was no limit to the fevered conjuring of imaginary further mobs. Rumors of organized bodies of Irishmen coming from all over the state to burn and slaughter were rife; demonstrations and threats, counter demonstrations and counter threats, were hurled in newspapers, by hand-bills, and by incipient mobs, until Boston and its vicinity was in a whirlwind of excitement. The Roman Catholic Bishop Fenwick and the other priests behaved with wisdom and moderation. They exhorted their people in most eloquent terms to take no revenge, but to await without misgiving the course of aroused public opinion and the law.

The Faneuil Hall committee, as has been said, secured the arrest of thirteen rioters; and a mass of testimony, bolstered by much legal eloquence, was

poured forth at the several trials. But, while the guilt of most of the defendants was plain, the proof against them was conflicting and impeachable, the atmosphere of the court rooms was blue with bigotry and hate, the tales and rumors which had fomented the mob still had living force. The verdict, therefore, was "not guilty" in every case save one—and he probably the least criminal—young Marcy, a boy of seventeen, who had done nothing more heinous than to sell the Bishop's books that night at mock auction before tossing them into the flames. At the petition of thousands of Catholics, he was in a few months pardoned. So ended the famous Convent mob.

Not really ended; for many a legislature was memorialized to make good the money loss, placed at not less than fifty thousand dollars, suffered by the Bishop and the Convent's pupils. But while, in all cases, the committees of the General Court reported that this reparation should be made, the appropriation of the money has never yet been voted; and for more than forty years the gaunt ruin of the Convent stood on its conspicuous height, a monument, left of intention by its owners, to the injustice of free Massachusetts.

The Convent site and neighborhood were long ago transferred from Charlestown to the town of Somerville. Today Mt. Benedict has been cut away to fill up the marshes along the Boston and Maine Railroad; and far below the quiet garden of the Ursulines will run streets of houses, obliterating the last vestiges of this dramatic event.

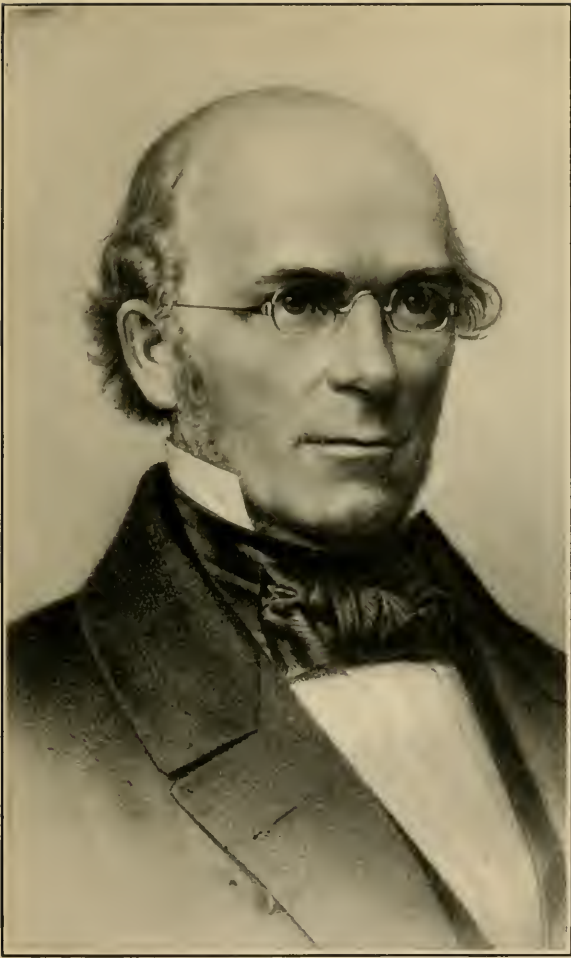
## VII

## THEODORE PARKER

**A**T the head of Lexington Green stands a statue of a fine young farmer, his musket ready, his whole form alert for action. It is called Capt. John Parker, but it is not he; for that modest leader of the Minute Men died in September, 1775, leaving no pictured or sculptured trace behind. The figure on Lexington Green is better than a mere portrait. It is an idealization of the Parker spirit,—the spirit of protest against wrong, the spirit of popular championship, the spirit of democracy.

It was an absurd spectacle,—that of seventy undisciplined farmers standing in opposition to eight hundred of the King's best men. Yet in its meaning and results that fight at Lexington was one of the great battles of the world. Even Napoleon with all his legions changed the course of history scarcely more than did Capt. John Parker and his handful of uncouth men.

He and his followers were untrained in militarism, but they were not unschooled. They and their forebears had been disciplined by frontier life and warfare and had been educated in that finest academy of citizenship—the New England Town Meeting. In that school they had learned to **think** their own thoughts, to speak their own minds and to have due regard for the rights of everyone. To



THEODORE PARKER





them, therefore, the pretensions of the ill-advised King George were impossible; and, since they involved things dearer even than life, must be opposed, if need be, with life itself. The seven men who fell in the dawning of April 19th, the men from Woburn and from many other towns who died later in that day, planted with their very bodies the seeds of true democracy. Less than a hundred years later there was another costly planting; and to the end of time, there must be single martyrs and armies of martyrs for human liberty. High in that noble and blessed company stands Theodore Parker.

Poorly and obscurely born, therefore, as he was, Theodore, as the grandson of Capt. John Parker, had a unique inheritance. Martyrship and leadership were in his blood, and noble accounting did he render of the splendid heritage. Like Lincoln, he not only knew the common people, he believed in them, confident that through their solid common sense right and truth are certain to prevail. There is no more significant phrase in American literature than this sentence of Parker's: "*The people are always true to a good man who truly trusts them.*" It is as a leader of the people against injustice, against superstition, against ignorance, against the crushing and deadening weight of outworn conventions, that Parker should be judged; and it was as such a leader that his great work for the world was done.

Moreover, as befits a genuine democrat, Theodore Parker was intensely practical. Profoundly religious, he never was tempted into mysticism; lov-

ing to preach, he never became lost in the forest of his own words; an ardent reformer, he yet never overlooked the long, steep, weary road which lies between the conception and the realization of reform. Furthermore, he possessed what so many leaders and reformers lack,—that saving sense of humor, which shows a man the world-wide difference between the fruitful idea and the merely grotesque idea in his striving to improve the world.

A transcendentalist, he yet kept his feet always on the solid earth of human experience; a near neighbor, while pastor of the West Roxbury Church, of Brook Farm, he was never deceived as to the inevitable end of that Utopia; a strong advocate of temperance, he did not hesitate to denounce the folly of attempting to enforce total abstinence by law; welcomed in the best intellectual society of America and Europe, he never separated himself from, or lost faith in, the power and the instinctive grip upon fundamental truth of the slower minds of the great common people.

It was sneeringly said that his Music Hall audiences were made up not of the "best" persons, but of butchers, bakers, and small tradesmen. But it was in just that type of audience that Parker rejoiced, for in influencing them, as he so profoundly did, he knew that he was exerting a power that would tell. It was these men and women, he appreciated, who would make the laws, who would reform methods of philanthropy, who would dictate the education of the next generation, who would liberalize the churches, and who would, if necessary, fight that fight for the

slaves which he did not live to see, but which he foresaw must come.

In no direction did the practical quality of his mind appear more plainly than in his dealings with the complex problems of society. He was impatient of talk and was always eager, not only to work himself, but to get others busy. "I should like," he writes, "to preach a sermon on John Augustus, one of the most extraordinary men I ever knew; he created a new department of humanity and loved the unlovely." . . . "Ministers *preach* benevolence and beneficence; he *went* and *did* it. How many drunkards did he save from the pit of ruin! How many thieves and robbers and other infamous persons did he help out of their wickedness!" John Augustus, whom he thus eulogizes, was a shoemaker in Lexington, who for many years did all these things in the most unostentatious way, and who was among the first, moreover, to save youth by lying in wait for discharged boy prisoners and finding them honest work to do. It was that kind of personal, practical philanthropy which appealed to Mr. Parker, and he was never so happy as when he had organized, within his parish or without, some group of men and women for the actual, day-by-day work of social rescue and reform.

"Religion," Parker said, "rises early every morning and works all day." That was the type of his religion, his philanthropy, his labors for social betterment; and all three of these activities were intermingled in every thought and endeavor of his life. It is difficult, therefore, to disentangle one of his

interests from another, and to say: "Here he was a preacher, here an anti-slavery worker, here a social reformer." He was religious through and through, so that every act was to him an office of religion; while every religious aspiration, he believed, should take shape in deeds. He was so filled with this moral zeal that there was no work for the good of the community or of mankind in general in which he did not take a lively interest and generally a leading part. As his biographer, John Weiss, truly says, the period before the Civil War was one of intense moral awakening, making men to be extraordinarily alive, not simply to the problems of slavery, but to those of prison-reform, temperance, peace, Sunday observance, and to the general rescue, as Parker phrases it, of the "perishing classes." All these moral problems were discussed, moreover, not simply in pulpits, but on lyceum platforms, and with a fervor on the part of speakers and a breathless attention on the part of audiences today difficult to understand. It was true missionary zeal that led the lecturers of ante-bellum days to undergo such hardships as they did for mere pittance of pay. Slow and infrequent trains, without sleeping cars, endless waits at dreary junctions, nights of torment in unspeakable country hotels, long drives through cold winter evenings, ill-ventilated halls, and other almost incredible discomforts were the portion of every lyceum speaker, and to a semi-invalid like Theodore Parker these hardships must have been almost unbearable. Yet he did his full share of lecturing, in addition to the heavy duties

of preaching, of pastoral work and of writing, until his physicians actually forced him to flee to warmer climates in a vain effort to escape impending death. And whether working beyond his strength, or whether chafing in enforced idleness, he never complained, never lost his wonderful sweetness and sunniness of soul. He laments, it is true, the fact that he should have been able to do so little!—he who performed, in his fifty years of life, the work of six ordinary men; and after twelve years of preaching he regrets that the crisis of slavery should have forced him to turn aside from his plan to devote his life to the “perishing classes.” All that he did do, moreover, he regarded merely as the payment of a just debt to society. He who had been obliged to educate himself in the intervals of heavy work upon a farm; he who had been so poor that he could not take the degree at Harvard, though he passed all its examinations; he who was reviled as a heretic and shunned as a friend of the despised “Nigger;” he whose life was frequently threatened and was always in danger; he who found himself cut off in the zenith of life by a disease directly brought on by his labors for his fellowmen; he, at the beginning of his first real vacation, writes as follows:—

“I am now to spend a year in foreign travel. In this year I shall earn nothing; neither my food, nor my clothes, nor even the paper I write on. Of course I shall increase my debt to the world by every potato I eat, and each mile I travel. How shall I repay the debt? Only by extraordinary efforts after I return. I hope to continue my

present plans in this way:

"1. To work in behalf of temperance, education, a change in the social fabric, so that the weak shall not be slaves of the strong.

"2. To show that religion belongs to man's nature, that it demands piety, morality and theology.

"3. To write an introduction to the New Testament.

"4. To write a historical development of religion in the history of man.

"5. Such other works as may become necessary.

"In this way I hope to work out my debt."

We know how he paid his debt in the coin of anti-slavery service, how he minted his brain into the gold of scholarly thought and writing. How did he discharge that alleged obligation under the head which he first enumerates,—that of working "in behalf of temperance, education and a change in the social fabric?" In these and in many other social directions he was a glowing and stimulating force; and what he did was, as I have already said, intensely practical. He labored actively for temperance in flaming words full of graphic appeal; but it was a practical, not a fanatical, temperance that he zealously preached. He organized an active society for the actual street rescue of friendless, tempted girls. He studied education at first hand by long and faithful service on school committees, and he contributed many an important thought and plan to that slowly growing science. He formulated methods of public and private charity that anticipated the best ideas of to-day. And above all,



he forwarded true democracy, not by pulling the social and intellectual leaders down, but by raising the great common people up. "The people are always true to a good man who truly trusts them." He trusted them and, despite the calumnies heaped upon him for his heresies and his love of the black man, a great body of the people trusted him, followed him, and, after his untimely death, carried forward his work for the liberalizing of thought, for the broadening of education, for the systematizing of philanthropy, for the equalizing of opportunity, for the rescue of a nation of so-called freemen from the curse of slavery. He knew what democracy means, he believed in democracy, and he felt certain that if he placed his precious ideas and aspirations in the keeping of the common people, those thoughts and hopes would come, as fifty years later they are slowly coming, to full fruition, both in the lives of men and in the conduct of society.

## VIII

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN

**I**T is a waste of time, most persons will agree, to try to prove that Lincoln was a sort of supernatural being sent to save the United States. It is doubtful, even, if he should be called a political genius. He appeared at that supreme crisis because, as all history shows, every really great national need brings to the front its organizers and true leaders of men.

The wonderful thing about Lincoln was not the strange chain of events which brought him to the presidency, not the astonishing ability with which he, a novice in war, met the terrible demands of those four years; it was the homely skill, the dogged persistency, the serene courage by which he lifted himself out of the squalor of a "poor-white" home up to the largest position of personal responsibility that has come to any ruler in human history.

Every one is familiar, of course, with the successive steps of his extraordinary career; but to understand that career, it is necessary to put aside the glosses and glamors which hero-worshipping biographers have thrown about Abraham Lincoln, and to regard him simply as a man of the people who used his knowledge of, and his power with, the plain people to give him, in the last years of his life, moral command over the supremest crisis in the history of government. There is no solid ground for the

catchpenny phrases: "Lincoln the Inspired," "Lincoln the Saint," "Lincoln the Genius." He was none of these;—he was simply "Lincoln the Man."

He was born in a poor-white cabin in Kentucky—and I use the term, "poor-white," advisedly. It is true that his ancestors were sturdy Puritan folk from Hingham, Massachusetts, but it does not take more than two generations, if conditions are unfavorable, for the best Puritan stock—outwardly, at any rate—to degenerate; and there seems no real reason to believe that Lincoln's father was anything better than a poor-white loafer married to a woman superior indeed to him, but very little superior to the rest of the roving, shiftless population which was once so numerous in the Western and Southern Alleghanies. He had one great advantage, of course, in that for generations his people had been pioneers, had lived rough lives in the open, and had developed a largeness of limb and a strength of constitution which Abraham Lincoln inherited and which were at the foundation of his great career.

When Lincoln was seven his shiftless father shifted to Southern Indiana, where, two years later, the boy's mother died, and whence the father went back to Kentucky for a second wife. She was a thrifty and intelligent widow, and, as Lincoln's step-mother, was a genuine good angel in his life. For she made a decent home for him, smoothed down his uncouthness, and not only urged him, but helped him so far as she could, to get some knowledge of books and to develop those powers which had thus far been asleep within him. In all, how-

ever, his schooling did not cover a single year.

From Southern Indiana his father floated on unpaid mortgages into Central Illinois, which, from Abraham's twenty-first year until he went to Washington in 1861, was—with the exception of one term in Congress—the theatre of Lincoln's dramatic and epoch-making career.

From earliest childhood the boy worked, not only for his father, but for others to whom his labor was hired out, and he worked effectively, because of his health and strength, at whatever he undertook. The tradition regarding him, however, is that he was lazy, which means probably that he preferred to read, think and dream rather than to split rails, hoe corn, and feed the pigs. Those readings, especially of a volume of the Statutes of Indiana, which came into his hands, and those dreams, which must have been of a political career, led him after more or less adventure as a flatboat hand on the Mississippi in the Black Hawk War, as a most incompetent storekeeper in a collapsed "boom" village, and as a deputy surveyor, to take up, when he was about twenty-five years old, the study of the law.

Preparation for a legal career at the frontier was not severe, and Lincoln's knowledge when he was admitted to the bar, and established himself at Springfield, in 1837, must have been extremely scanty. But he possessed to an extraordinary degree that main reliance of even the most learned lawyer, —knowledge of human nature. This, together with his intellect and his homely but racy wit, gave him a command of juries, and attracted to him clients

for whom the profoundest knowledge of legal matters would have counted as nothing.

In viewing Lincoln's rapid rise into political prominence in Illinois, one must not forget that in a frontier community men are so shut off from other things of civilization that politics becomes a leading interest. Moreover, Illinois, perhaps because it is half Yankee and half Southern, has always been a rich field for political discussion and for the rearing of that type of man to whom politics is the breath of life. In such an atmosphere, Lincoln, who had extraordinary political shrewdness, who loved the game of politics, and who had far higher visions than even he himself appreciated, had also personal qualifications which made the step from obscurity to local fame comparatively easy. In the rough and tumble of frontier elections, he could not only hold his own with his tongue, but he could whip any man who dared to tamper with him. He was so close to the soil that he had no class prejudices to overcome. His very ugliness and awkwardness, coupled with the keenness of his jests and the raciness of his stories, made his public appearances real entertainments for a people hungry to be amused. Above all, he was honest through and through, and such downright, courageous honesty as his is certain to command respect, and, if it be coupled, as it was in Lincoln, with common sense, is equally certain to secure power.

His unswerving honesty with himself and with everybody else, and the clearness of his political vision, led him, moreover, to identify himself with

the minority,—and therefore reform—party in Illinois, that of the Whigs. Being a minority candidate, his first efforts at political office were, of course, vain; but his physical and mental strength and his power to win men, soon brought him what was really a personal victory, as representative to the Illinois legislature. He made, however, no great impression there, except as a member of the small group of giants known as the "Long Nine," who succeeded in having the Capitol of Illinois transferred to Springfield. It is difficult to point out just the moment when Lincoln emerged from obscurity as an acknowledged leader of politics in his adopted state; but the fact in his career which brought him national fame and which, therefore, led to his nomination for the presidency, was his opposition to Stephen A. Douglas, the man who for the fifteen years preceding 1860, was the idol of the Democratic party.

Of all the strange coincidences in Lincoln's life, none is more singular than the linking of his fortunes with those of Douglas. Meeting, as young men, in the city of Springfield, the one hailing, as the Westerners say, from Kentucky, and the other from Vermont, these two strong individualities came into early clashing over the affections of that Miss Todd who was afterwards to become Mrs. Lincoln. But they were political rivals also, in a contest which was to last more than twenty years. Douglas had, however, every apparent superiority. He was scholarly, well-trained as a lawyer, of agreeable, even handsome presence, and an early leader

in that party, the Democratic, which was on the top wave in both state and nation. With these advantages he ran, of course, far and fast ahead of Lincoln, so that, at the time when the latter was only an obscure member of the Illinois legislature, Douglas was not only Senator in the National Congress but was so much a leader in Washington as to be regarded as in logical succession for the presidency. Every year, however, Douglas' position became more difficult, for he had to steer a safe course between the fire-eating Southerners who were forcing an ever wider extension of slavery, and the rapidly growing northern sentiment, which demanded that the "peculiar institution" should not be carried north of Mason and Dixon's line. At this vulnerable point in Douglas' power and popularity, Lincoln struck again and again until he finally gave him his political death-blow.

Lincoln's famous war of words with Douglas, it should be emphasized, was not over the abolition of slavery, but was solely over the question of the extension of slavery. As far back as the making of the Constitution, slavery had been a troublesome issue; but as that great document had to be a succession of compromises in order to get ratified at all, this burning problem was then smothered. It smouldered until 1820, when it was again quieted, men thought forever, by the Missouri Compromise, through which Missouri was admitted as a slave state on the agreement that slavery should not be extended north of 36° 30' or west of that State. Thereafter, in order to keep the balance of the



Senate equal, states were admitted in pairs, a southern and a northern one together. The supply of northern territory, however, was so much greater, that, to maintain this balance, the Southerners brought on the Mexican War and the annexation of Texas, a step which made the slavery question flame up again. It was quenched for a time by the Clay Compromise of 1850, which tried to get rid of the slavery question mainly by ignoring it, and by the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law.

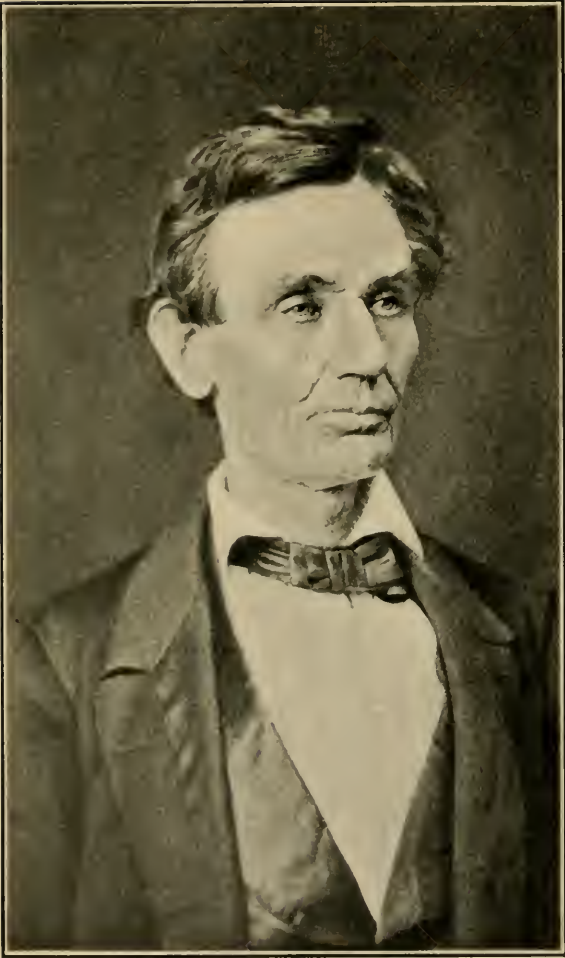
Meanwhile Lincoln had built up a fair practice in the city of Springfield, first with Stuart as his partner, then with Logan, and finally with Herndon; had served, as the only Whig from Illinois, in the 30th Congress; and had so offended his constituents by his honest attitude towards the Mexican War, that he had failed of re-election. This was in 1848, and during the next six years he settled into the pursuit of the law, seemingly but mildly interested in the great game of politics. Then in 1854 came the Kansas-Nebraska bill, with what was in effect a repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and the whole question of slavery blazed up again. The Whigs, free-soilers, and anti-Nebraska democrats coalesced into the Republican party, Lincoln was righteously inflamed, and he was at once pushed forward as the Republican champion to oppose Douglas, who, as chairman of the Committee on Territories in the United States Senate, had contrived this infamous piece of legislation.

During those succeeding six years, Lincoln and Douglas pursued one another hotly in a race, first

for the Senatorship, and then for the Presidency; their main theme of contention being slavery. The most dramatic as well as the most important phase in this fight of political giants was the series of debates that opened the campaign for the U. S. Senatorship. Douglas had been nominated by the Democrats, and Lincoln by the Republicans, and in accepting his nomination, Lincoln had used those fateful words, "A house divided against itself cannot stand," which placed squarely before the country the real issue between the North and South. Lincoln challenged Douglas to a series of joint debates, seven in number, which took place during the hot summer of 1858 in different towns of Illinois. Lincoln lost the Senatorship, but he did it deliberately by trapping his opponent into a statement which would gain for Douglas the temporary support of the legislature of Illinois, but which was sure so to split the Democratic Party that the presidency would be thrown into the hands of the Republicans. Lincoln never did a shrewder thing than when, in the course of those debates, he made Douglas assert, in regard to the famous Dred Scott decision—a decree of the Supreme Court which declared the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional—that since slavery could not exist if it were not protected by the local police, a state really had the power to exclude slavery by refusing to protect it. This flimsy argument satisfied Douglas' constituents temporarily, but it wrecked the Democratic party, the extreme Southerners refusing to support Douglas after he had thus, as they said, deserted and betrayed them.

The Democratic nominating convention of 1860 split squarely in two; and while Douglas was nominated by the Northern Democrats, Breckenridge was chosen, in a rump convention, by the Southerners. This made it certain that the Republican candidate would be elected. Intense interest centered, therefore, in the Republican convention, which was held, in Chicago, May 16, 1860. The three logical candidates were Seward of New York, the acknowledged leader of the party, Chase of Ohio, and Lincoln of Illinois. Seward led on the first ballot, but had not a majority. Shrewd trading on the part of Lincoln's managers brought him almost even with Seward on the second ballot; and on the third he forged so far ahead that Ohio, by transferring four votes, gave him the nomination. By so narrow a chance as this was the Union saved; for, had Seward been nominated, it is humanly certain that compromise would have followed compromise until a permanent division of the United States would have been the only way out. A splitting between North and South would have doubtless been followed by other divisions, until we would have become a second Central America.

In November, 1860, Lincoln was elected; and this choice meant the secession of South Carolina and the other cotton states. Between November, 1860, and his inauguration in March, 1861, was the most critical period in all our history; for the feeble and utterly discredited Buchanan could do nothing, even had he wished, to stay the preparation for war and the consolidation of those Southern



ABRAHAM LINCOLN



states, and the transfer to their forts and arsenals of a great stock of federal arms and ammunition. All the other great leaders of the Republican party, meanwhile, were preaching compromise and concession, were urging peace at any price, and were openly flouting Lincoln, who, helpless to act until the 4th of March, could only iterate and reiterate his determination to make no compromise with slavery, to give no aid and comfort to disunion. Had he yielded one inch, the South would have been master of the situation. As it was, six states, in December and January, seceded, and on February 18, 1861, set up the Confederate Government with Jefferson Davis as its President.

At last the terrible four months were over, Lincoln had reached Washington without being assassinated, and in his inaugural had made clear the single present issue between North and South,—the issue of *Union*. Simply and quietly the President declared that “no State can lawfully get out of the Union” and that he would “hold, occupy and possess the places belonging to the Government.” This meant war; but neither section wanted to begin. The crucial point was Fort Sumter, in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, where Major Anderson, with a handful of troops, was virtually in a state of siege. To succor him meant the beginning of real hostilities; to abandon him meant surrender to the Confederacy. Lincoln took the first alternative, notified the Southern commander that he would send provisions to Anderson, and, as a result, Sumter was fired on and, just four years

before Lincoln's death, this most bloody and fateful of civil wars began.

In entering upon the Civil War, Lincoln exhibited in the highest degree not only that political wisdom for which he was so conspicuous, but also a serene confidence in the outcome of the conflict that seems incredible. For he deliberately brought together in his cabinet elements which, to a less far-seeing man, would have seemed to make political harmony impossible. As Secretary of State he appointed Seward, his chief rival for the presidency and a man who had never hesitated to show his supreme contempt for Lincoln's powers; as Secretary of the Treasury he appointed Chase, his second most formidable rival; and, after Cameron had proved himself incompetent as Secretary of War, he invited to that most important of offices Stanton, an arrogant, overbearing man who had denounced and traduced Lincoln scurrilously from the day of that President's nomination. He put in Blair, a southerner, though opposed to disunion, as postmaster general, and filled the other cabinet offices with heads of factions. Moreover, a majority of these men had formerly been Democrats, while Lincoln himself had been a Whig; and the only thing upon which, in the beginning, this strange official family seems to have agreed is in believing Lincoln utterly incompetent for the work ahead of him. How conscious the President must have been of his own power and of the righteousness of his cause to dare to make this bold political stroke! And what magnificent politics, in the high sense of the word,



it was! For by taking his chief political rivals into his cabinet, he stopped them from heading cabals and coalitions against him; by including the chief intellectual leaders of both parties he made sure that those brains should be used for him instead of against him; by taking men of different parties and factions he made sure not only of holding those factions, but also of stimulating a healthy rivalry. Only a man of extraordinary mental and moral courage would have dared, however, to take a step that, if unsuccessful, would have wrecked him, the party, the government and the Country itself.

No one today needs, of course, to be told, in detail, of the Civil War; but we do need to be reminded that, until the Battle of Gettysburg, it was, for the Union side, a losing conflict. Even after that invasion of the North was stopped, there was many a day when the fate of the Union hung in the balance, until the summer of 1864, when Sherman divided the South by his march to the sea, and Grant began his scientific investment of the Confederate capital. And at every hour was Lincoln confronted by the danger of foreign alliance with the Confederacy, a step that, unless checkmated by general European war, might have been fatal to the Northern cause. Naturally of a most melancholy and brooding temperament, the President had, nevertheless, in order to avert national panic, to appear—publicly, at least—at all times optimistic, confident, certain of the fortunate outcome of the war. And he had to be this in face of

difficulties scarcely to be imagined.

The country had no such resources as it has to-day; it was peculiarly poor because just recovering from the distressing panic of 1857. The very fact—glorious as it was—that the flower of Northern youth went to the front, made the difficulty of organizing an army great, since either they all wanted to be officers or else their very possession of brains made it hard to mold them into those unthinking parts of a machine which an efficient rank and file must be. And the task of building up a great fighting machine was made ten times more difficult by the fact that the spoils system—in which, by the nature of his political education, Lincoln believed—was rampant at Washington. Therefore every appointment, every contract, had to be considered not simply on its merits, but also with regard to its political effect; and the days and nights of the great leader, which should have been sacred to the working out of the vast national problems, must be largely wasted in stormy interviews with place-hunters, spoilsmen, greedy contractors and their subservient Congressmen. The resulting scandals we would forget except as they threw added sorrows and burdens upon Abraham Lincoln.

And the advice that he received!—beginning with the thinly veiled orders and demands of his own cabinet and going down to the wise recommendations of the remotest cross-roads grocery. Everybody except the President knew just how to end the war, and told him so. But his patience, his humility, his courtesy were limitless; and it was

only when he felt absolutely sure, that he went straight ahead regardless of every obstacle and every contrary adviser. It was only seldom that he answered as he did the delegation of magnates from New York who, telling him how many millions they represented, practically ordered him at once to build some sort of vessel strong enough to protect New York against that new engine of destruction, the famous Merrimac. "Gentlemen," replied Lincoln, "if I were as wise as you think you are, and if I were as rich as you say you are, and if I were as scared as I see you are, I would build that vessel myself and make a present of it to the government;" whereupon he turned on his heel without another word.

Lincoln was the very spirit of democracy, was the personification of all that is best in the history of America; for his life is what that of every citizen should be,—a union of idealism with high common sense. He saw visions, but he did not try to reach them by flying; on the contrary, he plodded along the dusty highroad of hard-headed practicality. He was unalterably convinced that he was right; but he neither despised nor berated others for being wrong. He was patient, with that lofty serenity which knows that all God's ways are sure. He was tolerant, with that spirit which understands that ignorance, not wilfulness, keeps men in the wrong. He was optimistic, with that deep wisdom which, perceiving every obstacle in the pathway, yet sees that time will conquer all. He was tactful, with the true instinct of a child, humble

with the humility of the really wise, loving, merciful, and forgiving, with the limitless breadth and charity of a noble soul.

His single aim in life was to fit himself for service and then to serve,—his friends, his party, his state, his country, the cause (greater than state or nation) of fundamental justice and eternal right. He showed how any youth, no matter from what poverty and ignorance, can exalt himself into a moral king of men; he proved what unremitting work can do; he demonstrated that the only road to enduring success is the straightforward path of honesty; he proved again that righteous courage wins; he exemplified the everlasting truth that the sheet anchors of life are the great moral issues.

There seems then, nothing of sacrilege in saying—so like was Lincoln to the Master, so closely did he follow in the steps of that earlier Emancipator—that martyrdom was a fitting end and crown of his career. And we as a nation may today soberly rejoice and say, using his own incomparable words, that we feel a "solemn pride" in having "laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom." The sacrifice of Lincoln, the sacrifice of the thousands of his people, will have been, however, vain, if we of the next generation do not fight the modern bloodless battles for freeing mankind from suffering, selfishness and evil in the same lofty and self-forgetting spirit as that of those who, under the leadership of Lincoln, fought the great military battles of the Civil War.

IX

THE HEART OF THE UNITED STATES

“**T**HE centre of population, now in Indiana, is traveling straight towards the middle point of Illinois. The centre of manufacturing has reached as yet only eastern Ohio, but is marching in a bee-line for Chicago.” This, the Illinois boast, is perhaps with somewhat rare coincidence the truth; and that state, in more than one meaning, is soon to be the controlling Heart of the United States. Therefore it is of vital, as well as of curious interest for New Englanders—fast becoming mere onlookers in the national administration—to examine and, so to speak, to auscultate this organ which will increasingly regulate the body politic.

Illinois drips fatness. Its black, oozy soil which eagerly devours one's shoes; its corn that, refined by selective processes, almost exudes oil; its hogs that can scarcely see through the deep folds of their unctuous envelope; its beefsteaks, pork-chops, and corn-cakes, glistening from the ceaseless sizzling of the frying pan; its very speech, with mouthed syllables and exaggerated “r's,”—all are fat with a fatness almost indecent to the spare New Englander. Moreover, the oleaginous carnival seems only just begun. Fertilizers and nitrogen-collectors are making the sand-dunes blossom; swamp-draining and

well-driving are equalizing conditions of moisture; rotation of crops is averting possible soil-exhaustion; while scientific breeding is enriching the corn at will and is blanketing the corn-fed hog with ever thicker layers of obesity.

To classify the huge stockyard industries as agriculture, is to place Illinois first among the farming states. To call them manufactures—and the people of Chicago generally do both—is to give her the rank of third among industrial commonwealths. She needs no forced construction of words, however, and she is not dependent upon Chicago alone, to put her in the forefront of manufacturing communities. For, having learned how to extract a high caloric from her low-grade coals; having begun, in dearth of other large mineral deposits, to coin her clays into those bricks, tiles and cements which, with steel, are the essence of modern building; possessing lake, river, steam, and electric transportation uninterrupted by any mountain or desert barriers, she is creating enormous enterprises which will soon place her at the very head.

Illinois takes toll, too, upon most of the main highways of America. In the wide area between the Atlantic Ocean and the Rocky Mountains she stands at the middle point. The raw and manufactured products of the earth—north, south, east, and west—must, in our seething traffic, surge largely through her territory; she is, and from geographical necessity must always be, the chief sluiceway for this ceaseless flood of things. More than this, the multitudinous sea of restless Americans—old ones and

new ones—pours into and through her avenues of travel. Unlike New York and Boston, mere filters through which the immigrant stream rushes or trickles, leaving behind the scum and dregs of alien peoples, Illinois is a smelting-pot in which the stronger and more active foreigners are fused with one another and with the older stock into real American citizenship.

The established population of Illinois, moreover, is already a remarkable alloy of North and South; for, from Chicago down to a line passing irregularly through its centre, the state is of Yankee origin, having been settled mainly by New England pioneers; but from the Ohio River north to that irregular line, the Illinois stock is distinctively southern. The "Egyptians," as they call the natives of Cairo, Thebes, and other grotesque namesakes of Old Nile, are in looks, in dialect, in habits of thought, and in instincts and traditions, markedly of the South.

An immigrant who gets as far from the coast as Illinois is almost certain to become Americanized, since the journey to the Atlantic is too great to be taken often, and there can be, therefore, little of that sailing back and forth which makes the immigrant of the seacoast cities frequently a denationalized being, severed from the old world, but not yet joined to the new. But in the smaller cities and in the towns of Illinois, as well as in those of other Middle West States, amalgamation has so far progressed that one may say: here is social and political America as it will be when immigration



shall have become normal, when the unsettled spaces shall have been filled up, when the face of substantially the whole country shall have become thick-sown with towns joined to one another and to the great cities by every form of present and yet undiscovered means of intercourse.

Such is the Illinois of today. In primeval times, however (that is, about a generation ago), she was as lean as she now is fat. The state has not simply gained materially,—she has been regenerated; she is a Cinderella translated from the ashheap to the palace among states. Less than forty years ago Illinois was a place disheartened. New Englanders, tired of attempting to raise crops on stone-heaps, had gone hopefully out to this frontier where a pebble is a curiosity. Southerners, set adrift by war or averse to working with emancipated blacks, had come North to make fortunes out of corn. The Easterners, however, still clung to the primitive agricultural methods of New England, while the Mississippians tried to cultivate cereals in the same way as cotton. The breaking up of so much virgin land, moreover, opened a very Pandora's box of miasmatic fevers. A people who knew nothing of the habits of the mosquito fought the "chills," as they indiscriminately called the fevers, with whiskey and quinine. Two-thirds of the population of the Southern Illinois bottom-lands died, in those pioneer days, of malaria and of diseases which found ready entrance into constitutions weakened by its assaults. The chills, the bad whiskey, and the adulterated quinine, produced a type little more ambitious than the Georgia "Cracker." The

once active Yankee, weakened by malaria, depressed by the flat monotony, contaminated by the shiftlessness of his poor-white neighbors, became even more inert than they; and thus was produced the typical, hideous Illinois landscape of about 1880.

Treeless distances were broken only by rare bits of "timber," or by hedges of the melancholy osage orange, planted as breaks against the frightful winds. Roads that were impassable for a third of the year, mountainous with ruts for another third, and whirling dustbreeders during the remainder, sprawled untidily in miscellaneous directions. There were no bridges to speak of; but there were fearful mudfords called "slews," into which one plunged at a terrifying angle from the hither brink, through which the natives urged the horses or oxen by merciless beatings and incredible oaths, and out of which it seemed, as in "Pilgrim's Progress," impossible for such sinners ever to emerge.

The so-called towns, clinging here and there to the single-track railroads, were mere huddles of one-storied shacks, pretending to be two-storied by the palpable device of a clap-boarded false front. At long distances from these towns, and from one another, would be found a house, single-roomed, with a cock-loft, and set upon stilts to form a shelter for the pigs. Its front steps were a slanting board, like the approach to a hen-roost, and it was swept inside and out, above and below, by every blast from Heaven. Outside the door, just where the sink-spout emptied, would be dug a shallow well, its water so rich in lime as actually to taste of it, and as a con-

sequence so hard that a person who should spend his whole life in Illinois would be a sedimentary deposit of the dust and mud of all his days. Scattered around were a few sheds to give pretense of shelter to the ill-kept cattle; scattered still farther around, and shelterless, were agricultural machines, once costly, but now rusted and practically useless; and spreading away as far as one could see was an ocean of the Illinois staple, corn.

Were the harvest promising, however, along came the chinch-bug, the army-worm, or the locust, to eat it clean, or the prairie fire to burn it. Were it brought actually to the point of a fine harvest, there would be no demand, or the rickety railroads would be so choked with freight that the grain could not reach a market, and must be used for household fuel. Working listlessly in those fields were gaunt men, shaking with "chills;" in that shanty were a gaunt woman and many cadaverous children, also shaking with chills, the lives of all of them a seemingly hopeless struggle against the elements, sickness, poor food, and the uncertainty of "craps."

So far as they could navigate the prairie and the "slews," the people were hospitable, and at harvest-time the neighbors over a wide circle would, in turn, help each the other with his crops. At funerals, too—almost the sole diversion,—friends and relatives would come from far and near, and would encamp for a fortnight upon the bereft, eating in melancholy festivity the funeral fried meats. Religion, like everything else, was rugged and strong, for the pains of eternal damnation were far more conceivable than

the blessings of paradise. Schools were scarce and doctors scarcer. In short, there was found in Illinois at that time frontier life with none of the excitement which comes from the dangers of exploration, but with all the discomfort arising out of remoteness from even the rudiments of civilized existence.

What has transformed the fever-stricken, mortgage-ridden, and poverty-blasted Illinois of the eighties into the thriving, hustling heart of the United States? Two things: modern science, and real, effective education. Draining the fields and discovering the proximate cause of malaria practically destroyed the chills and fever; extending and modernizing railroad and steamship lines gave ready access to the markets of the world; the telephone put an end to the horrible isolation and loneliness of the farmhouse; the interurban trolley-line made pathways over the muddy prairies and bottomless "slews;" cement manufacturing enabled the smallest hamlet to build sidewalks and even to pave streets; while, as for education, the farmers have been systematically and wisely instructed how to make farming pay.

This education of the farmer has been carried on in at least two ways. At the time when the face of Illinois was that of grim desolation, certain shrewd investors—notably some from Great Britain—bought up, for the proverbial song, great areas of these poorly tilled farms from their ague-stricken owners, and began to cultivate them in wholesale, scientific ways. So large grew these foreign holdings—in

some cases embracing the greater part of a county—that the state government became alarmed and passed legislation forbidding the inheritance of land excepting by *bona fide* citizens of Illinois. These and other extensive farms, however, all skilfully and very profitably developed, served, and still serve, as well-appreciated object lessons to the lesser owners, and have done much to revolutionize the farming methods of the entire Middle West.

The main work of education, however, has been performed by the state, entering the field as a practical teacher of scientific farming. The State University and Agricultural Experiment Station together began the work, fifteen or twenty years ago, of finding out what might be the best crops for Illinois, how those crops could most profitably be raised, in what ways they might be increased; and then, of teaching all this to the adult farmer through farmers' institutes, local experiment stations, and demonstration trains, and to the farmer's son through courses in agriculture in the University.

The State University cannot be acquitted of all ulterior motive in this; on the contrary, it deliberately developed this sort of education in order to catch the farmers' votes. For years that State University had been going to the capitol, humbly begging for ten thousand or twenty thousand dollars, and finding it almost impossible to secure even that pittance from rural members who could see nothing for them, directly or indirectly, in the University. But when Dr. Andrew S. Draper was made president, he and some of his colleagues among the trus-

tees and faculty determined to win the farmer vote by proving that the University could put millions of dollars into the pockets of the farmers by increasing the yield of corn, by teaching how to utilize swampy and sandy lands, by improving the breeds of cattle, by developing dairying, etc. Nobly the University fulfilled its self-imposed task, and generously did the farmer-legislature respond with appropriations, so that today it gives millions where formerly it begrudged ten-thousands.

Other elements, of course, have entered in. The rapid growth of the University of Chicago has spurred the country districts into a rivalry most profitable to the State University at Urbana; and a florid type of advertising, appealing to the average Westerner's love of bigness, has been used with consummate skill. Whatever the means, however,—and they have all been honorable, if more breezily Western than those to which the East is accustomed,—and whatever some of the ill effects upon the University, the results in the state as a whole have been little short of magical. For the University in its campaign for votes and funds, has not stopped at the farmers. It has sedulously catered, too, in the good meaning of that word, to the manufacturers. The engineering side has grown even faster than the agricultural; and its schools, housed in a number of well-designed buildings, are fast taking high rank. These schools are making themselves directly useful to the state, among many other ways, by conducting experiments upon the low-grade coals of Illinois, burning them with every sort of grate-bar, under



every conceivable condition, and in all kinds of mixtures, in order to determine in what ways they may be made to produce the most power at the least expense. They are carrying on an elaborate series of tests upon concrete, plain and reënforced, to ascertain the value of the various mixtures and the behavior of this new building material under all manner of demands. And in coöperation with the Illinois Central Railroad and the interurban railways, the University maintains two elaborately fitted dynamometer cars, running them for long distances, and placing the results at the disposition of the state.

What have been some of the effects, from the standpoint of a casual Easterner, of the enormous and comparatively sudden development of this great, pivotal state? The characteristic most obvious, as has been said, is that of omnipresent fatness, and of the materialistic attitude of mind which such plenteousness breeds. Fertility, be it of fields or of beasts, is a topic which never wearies, and which makes one feel at last that the very sows and cornstalks are in a conscious race for fecundity. The stockyards are proudly shown, not as a triumph of modern ingenuity, but as a spectacle of animals by the acre. The increased oil of the selectively bred corn is exhibited, not as an intellectual conquest of the chemist, but as a feeder of hogs still fatter than before. Even the frenzy of the wheat-pit, and the fortune-hunting schemes which rob the poor of their savings, are attempts to make money breed faster than it has any right, or real power, to do.

The dominant note in conversation, therefore, is



that of gain,—gain in acreage, gain in yield, gain in income; and to one who looked no farther it would appear that the mass of the people are sordid and materialistic, are mere worshippers of the fast-waxing dollar. It is this superficial materialism, with its fungus-growth of hideousness, that makes the New England traveler condemn, in large part, Chicago. A lake-front unsurpassed in possibilities of beauty is usurped by the tracks and purlieus of an ill-kept railroad. Business streets that, ten years after the great fire, promised to be almost grand in their width and perspective, are now mere smoky tunnels under the filth-dripping gridirons of the elevated railways. State Street, which then had the elements of a noble main avenue, affronts one with the unspeakable lines of cast-iron department stores. Palaces on certain avenues are cheek-by-jowl with dilapidated hovels; the semi-detached villas farther out of town are, many of them, wretchedly bedraggled; and the whole impression left by large areas is a mingling of interminable clothes-lines and flaming, peeling bill-boards. The city's buildings are black with the smoke blanketing the sky; factories, each more hideous than the other, intrude almost everywhere; and the vile river, only partly cleansed by the drainage canal, makes even suicide abhorrent. One does not hesitate thus to scourge Chicago, for she has no excuse. She cannot plead newness, for she is no younger than Cleveland, which is beautiful; she cannot plead swiftness of growth, for the magnificent city of Berlin has developed quite as rapidly as she.

*electric*

Leaving Chicago, however—and the city has annexed so much territory that it takes an hour or two to do so,—and getting out upon the uncontaminated prairie, one realizes that this vast area of farms and towns and small cities is a very different thing from the Babel metropolis; and it is this rural Illinois which is the true flesh and blood of the great heart of the United States. The Atlantic seaboard states, with the ocean in front of them and the mountains behind them, with Europe and South America and the islands of the sea feeding them with ideas more or less new to the United States, will never wholly lose their individuality. The Pacific states, for like reasons, will have distinctiveness for all time to come. But the enormous basin between the Appalachians and the Rockies will, as it consolidates, grow, like its monotonous plains, more and more indistinguishable, the one section from the other, until it will think and act and live substantially as a unit, dominating by its bulk and the vastness of its homogeneity the political life of the United States. As the advance type of what this interior empire is to be,—indeed as the dominant pioneer which will largely impose its own characteristics upon that extensive area,—Illinois should have the careful study of all thoughtful Americans.

The first characteristic which strikes one in the Illinois people is their friendliness. It is said of the Australians that the question of ancestry is tabooed in polite society, lest investigation hark back to Botany Bay. While the Middle Westerners have no such fear, while most of them, did they choose,

could go back to the purest Southern and New England strains, so many of them have come "out of the everywhere" that they do not stop to inquire who was a man's grandfather, but, on the contrary, bid him welcome without even waiting to be introduced. The old hospitality of pioneer days has survived, and opens the house without apology for its shortcomings, or lamentations that it is not more fit. This kind of hospitality, unfortunately, is becoming obsolete in Massachusetts, where today, in order to see his neighbors, a man must put on evening dress, play bridge, and eat caterers' ice-cream.

A second thing which impresses a New Englander is the restlessness and abruptness born of lifelong "hustle." The people of Illinois are in too much of a hurry to mind the little niceties of etiquette; they say the blunt thing because it takes less time than courtesy; their behavior in the hours of supposed relaxation is that which the Massachusetts man keeps for his office, where he has to be brusque in order to get through. This gives everything in Illinois an air of ceaseless business, and leads to the unwarranted conclusion that all Westerners (as some of them do) sleep in their working clothes.

A third characteristic of the people of the Middle West is their large view of things, or, to speak more accurately, their way of looking at things in the large. Because of the habit of ploughing fields by the square mile and of killing pigs by the carload, the man of Illinois deals in commercial ideas by the yard, not, as Easterners do, by the quarter-inch. He plays for high stakes in business, and if, as is likely, he loses,

he plays again. Whether he is up or whether he is down seems to matter little, provided he keeps in the game. This sweeping habit of mind, however, is fatal to fine analysis; and while, for example, the Illinois teacher is ready to try splendid, comprehensive experiments in the schools and colleges, while he handles the problems of education as Napoleon handled strategy, he is lacking in intellectual discrimination and *finesse*. As a result of this habit of mind, most of these Middle Westerners seem to the Easterner superficial and inclined to accept what Gelett Burgess so cleverly calls "bromidioms" for revelations of new truth.

What strikes one most startlingly, however, in the people of Illinois is their lack of imagination. This, moreover, is a fundamental deficiency. They are a plains people, with no mountains to vary their viewpoint, no changes of altitude to foster modifications of temperament, no salt breezes to make their brains tingle, no expanse of ocean, no beetling cliffs, no roar of breakers, no play of color upon the sea, no awfulness of tempest on ocean and on mountain, none of those natural phenomena—except perhaps cyclones—which are absolutely essential, not only to the making of poets, but also to the developing of the humbler imaginations of Tom, Dick and Harry. Of course many of them travel,—journeying they treat in the same large way as business, thinking nothing of traveling four hours by train to buy a spool of thread,—but the rank and file of them do not go far enough from home ever to see the ocean or to climb a respectable hill,

There is, therefore, and always must be, over this vast central United States this limitation of experience which places the natives, figuratively as well as literally, upon a lower plane than mountain and coast-dwellers. They have some, and will have more, idealism; but it is the idealism of doing things on a large scale, not that of seeking to attain such perfection as only the highly developed imagination is able to portray. Their ideals for America are, and probably always will be, sturdy but commonplace,—not like those, therefore, of the men who conceived the Declaration of Independence and framed the Constitution.

Because of these fundamental qualities, Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Cannon (from Danville, Illinois) are to these Middle Westerners the greatest and wisest among statesmen. Both these leaders are honest, like the average of men in Illinois; both are “hustlers” like them; the one is nervously busy, the other is shrewdly canny, like them; both are blunt, like them; both are fighters, as those men of Illinois have had to be; both lack imagination, and therefore utter long-accepted platitudes with the sonority of new-found wisdom; and, like those folk of the Middle West, both are genuine democrats, accepting men for what they are, and liking them, not because they had good grandfathers, but because they seem in a fair way to be good grandfathers. Political leaders of the Roosevelt and Cannon type are doubtless to be, therefore, the very highest which we can ever reach in statesmanship, and democracy of the Illinois type is to be the standard of

the twentieth century.

New England must recognize this, accept it, and govern herself accordingly. She must appreciate, not only that she never again can take that leading part in the councils of the nation which she held for a hundred years, but also that she must never expect to see the kind of democracy which was the ideal (however inadequately reached) of the Atlantic states when they were the leaders of America. The democracy of the government is henceforth to be that of the great Central Plain, a democracy much more widespread but far less fertile of great men and of high aspirations than was that of the first century of our national life. Mediocrity is in the political saddle; and the business, therefore, of the educational, as distinguished from the political leader is to provide that type of common schooling which shall tend to uplift mediocrity rather than, as is the usual result of our present methods, to perpetuate mediocrity, and to discourage even the gifted youth.

Hence the rôle of Massachusetts, with her history, her climate and topography, her lead as the best educated and the most "otherwise-minded" (that is to say, the most uplifted above mediocrity) state of the Union, with her inheritance of sea-power and her nearness to Europe,—her special rôle under the new order is to develop, through the intelligent education of the many and through the special training of the few, the exceptional man, whether in literature, art, science, statecraft, commerce or manufacturing.

Massachusetts cannot compete with the thousand-acre farms of Illinois, in that species of agriculture;



but she can hold her own and can excel, even with her tiny holdings, by stimulating that intensive farming which makes an acre of swampland yield more in point of value than a square mile of prairie. She cannot manufacture in a large way, as the West and South can, close as both are to the raw material, and accustomed as the former is to dealing with large propositions; but she can make the finer and the finest things, most of which now come from abroad, but all of which might readily be fashioned within the four boundaries of the commonwealth.

Massachusetts can solve the hard problems of nurturing and training the most highly skilled workmen, if she will utilize the energy of the men and women who are eager and fit to make a sound study of that vital question. The state can produce, not only great artisans, but great artists, if she will but give that encouragement which has always been essential to their flowering. And those great colleges and schools for which the commonwealth is justly famous can keep themselves at the front as leaders and inspirers if they will be true to that idealism which, from its very founding, has been the life and soul of Massachusetts.

The deservedly large and phenomenally growing state universities of the Middle West will, fortunately, press these Massachusetts institutions hard; but they can never catch up if the education of the commonwealth keeps going too. These western universities will lose breath in the running, for two reasons: first, because they must always keep an eye upon politics and must often do, not what they know



to be educationally right, but what they are certain the people will demand,—and that people, as has been seen, is governed by mediocrity; secondly, because these state universities must dovetail in with the common-school system and must admit practically every public-school boy or girl who can show a very moderate proficiency. Therefore no state-supported university in a democracy can ever compete on equal terms with one privately endowed, which has none to placate excepting the alumni, and which may weed out its student body just as far as it thinks necessary to maintain the highest standards of efficiency.

Massachusetts, however, has many things to learn of the opulent, optimistic Middle West, and it is greatly to be wished that every citizen of the Bay State might spend at least one year of his early manhood in such a state as Illinois. Indeed, our educational system will not be complete until it is made possible for a youth seeking a higher education to take his college and professional course partly in the East and partly in the West, the leading institutions having put themselves, for that purpose, on some common basis of scholarship requirement and each having consented to give, like the state law, "due faith and credit" to the educational work of all the others.

Could the great bulk of "leading" Massachusetts men be induced to make even a temporary acquaintance with the spirit of the people of the Middle West, they would discover that the Hub of the Solar System has been moved, and that an attempt to make a close corporation, capitalized upon ancient prestige, of Bostonianism is to invite commercial, industrial,

and intellectual dry-rot. Too many native Bostonians are of the mind of the aristocratic lady from Cambridge, who, late in life, was induced to spend a few weeks at Gloucester, and who announced to her amazed friends on her return that she had met there quite a number of excellent persons whose names even she never before had heard. Massachusetts men, too, were they to go West occasionally, would learn the merits—as well as the demerits—of “hustling,” and would perhaps acquire some of that simple, hearty friendliness which so lubricates the machinery of social intercourse.

There are, however, more specific and important things for Massachusetts to learn from Illinois. She ought, above all, to adopt the well-considered plan—almost magical in its effects—of scientifically exploiting her resources, and teaching her farmers, merchants, manufacturers, importers and exporters what the state is capable of doing. It is a trite saying that only a few of the possibilities of a human being are developed in the ordinary course of a man's or woman's life. It is still more true, however, that but the merest beginning has been made in the development of the resources of Massachusetts or of any other state of the Union.

The forests, in a political division so small and so densely peopled as is Massachusetts, would seem hardly worth consideration; yet, were even the rudiments of the science of forestry comprehended by the farmers, immense areas of land, now waste, might be made to yield, every thirty or forty years, a crop of great value. The applications of chemistry to

farming have so revolutionized this industry that—including these forest areas—there is scarcely a foot of the bleak soil of Massachusetts which might not be made profitable. Her conformation provides hundreds and thousands of little water-courses, which, properly utilized, might be made, by electrical transmission, large sources of manufacturing power.

The Bay State has no coal-beds; but she has enormous areas of peat, to utilize which is now a theoretical, and soon will be a practical, possibility. With her many cities and large towns, and with the growth of rapid transit, dairying, market-gardening, and the raising of fowls may be indefinitely extended, with increasing profit to both producer and consumer. Above all, with a long seaboard protected by encircling capes and presenting many safe harbors, with ample water-powers, with a comparatively dense population providing, together with immigration, an abundant supply of potential workmen, and with her long history of manufacturing prowess, Massachusetts should always remain great among industrial states.

For such a development of her resources, the commonwealth needs to study and heed the example of the Middle West: that of educating her citizens in the fundamental principles of production and distribution, and in the application of those principles to the requirements of modern life. The world today is a world of applied science; and the line of development to be followed—especially in such states as Massachusetts—is that of the application of science to agriculture, to manufacturing, to commerce, to

transportation, and, not least, to education. The states of the Middle West—many of them daughters of Massachusetts—have clearly pointed out the way; it is for Massachusetts to profit by their example and to recover, in leadership along these modern lines, the educational prestige which, in the ancient and now outworn paths of learning, she for so many years maintained.

## X

## THE ETERNAL FEMININE

**J**OHAN FISKE, in his lucid way, shows that civilization has arisen largely from the simple fact that the young of man are born, and for some years remain, so helpless that abandonment means death. He might well have gone farther and maintained that the evolution of mankind out of savagery has been due, not simply to the helplessness of infancy and the consequent necessity for family life, but also to the fact that the rearing of children has been so largely in the hands of women. It is the eternal feminine transmitted to men in their blood that keeps them as decent as they are; it is that eternal feminine deified for them in the impossible woman whom, in youth, they worship, that changes them from cubs to men; it is the eternal feminine with which, personified, callow youths "fall in love" that not only civilizes the individual but is gradually bringing towards genuine civilization a large portion of mankind.

Woman possesses the eternal feminine by the grace of God. Man cannot possess it except in that vile counterfeit, effeminacy; in that pale reflection of it which comes sometimes through asceticism; or in some abnormal instance where the man must play the mother's part. It is the absolute, spiritual sex-distinction which no propaganda for equal suffrage, no striving for economic equality, no affectations of

the "bachelor girl,"—which not even feminine smoking, drinking and swearing can ever wholly nullify or efface.

The obvious good, to men, of the eternal feminine is that of physical protection. It is the vigilant female hand which snatches Tommy from under horses' hoofs while the unheeding father dashes across the street. It is the mother who gauges mittens, rubbers and other *impedimenta* to those weather changes which make no impression upon the harsher male. It is the anxious feminine parent who fills the little boy with necessary—and, alas, with many superfluous—fears and precautions while the father, stoutly though quite ineffectually, is maintaining that experience is the sounder guide. A woman's ceaseless and thankless vigilance preserves many an obstinate urchin from an early grave, saves many a wilful youth from pneumonia, maintains intact the horrid qualities of many a curmudgeon. On the other hand, it smooths the path and makes possible the great work of countless prophets for humanity. So many men, however, are saved by some patient woman only to do her and the community mischief, that were this the sole, or even the main, function of the eternal feminine, it would be, in the long run, of doubtful value to humanity.

Fortunately, however, while men are being softened, spoiled and made monsters of egoism by this phase of femininity, they are at the same time being regenerated and uplifted by its many other manifestations. Like the spear of holy legend, the gift of healing in the eternal feminine far transcends its

power to wound. On this more subtle side, it is the greatest ethical force in the development of human-kind.

I have said, speaking for my sex, that the eternal feminine can never be ours to possess. But as in the case of spendthrift heirs with prudent trustees, the whole income is for us to squander while the real owners of that most precious of all capitals have only the doubtful privilege of maintaining and investing it for us to expend. In what manner is this unfailing income paid over to us—as a rule—ungrateful beneficiaries? It is given, in the first place, through our blood; for one of the many extraordinary privileges of boys is to “favor” (if one may use that most expressive Yankee word) their mothers. Next, the income is paid in the form of good precepts poured unceasingly by mother, aunts, grandmothers, painstaking school-teachers and candid sisters into our capacious and unheeding ears. Thirdly, the income takes the shape of good example given us, not by the aunts and grandmothers, who spoil us, or by the school-mistresses, who harry us, or by the sisters, who infuriate us; but by the silent instances of tenderness, of heavenly unselfishness, of “that firm love which chasteneth” given to us night and day by those true mothers of whom the world is full. Again, that income comes to us through chivalry, which is aroused in us by mother-love and which, as adolescence progresses, is transferred from her to that sweetheart with whose impossible perfections every youth having a spark of imagination endows some girl,—or series of young women. But the income



of the eternal feminine comes to us far more subtly and abidingly through the fact that our early years are spent mainly in the company and under the influence of women, and that our thoughts and feelings—profoundly as the man in us may think it despises them—are really women's thoughts and women's feelings. That tincture which the child and boy receives and which he never can eradicate from his nature is the very essence of the eternal feminine. The male point of view, because of this, is in each generation fundamentally modified by the feminine way of looking at life. Therefore when a man, outraged by the protean sensualities of life, sickened by the manifold ugliness of existence, disgusted by the mean wickedness of human intercourse, made cynical by the hypocrisies of both saints and sinners, is sorely tempted to give up striving and hoping and believing, the feminine in him,—illogical, unreasoning, careless of past experience and heedless of future difficulties—goes winging up to those absurd ideals which never can be reached, but which, nevertheless, are the celestial magnets that uplift mankind. All the altruism in the world—and there is more now than ever before—all the unselfish love of one's fellows, all those yearnings towards impossible good, all the hitching of lowly wagons to unreachable stars, are due to that element in us which we cannot describe, cannot define, cannot analyze, but which we know as the eternal feminine.

Childish innocence is not mere ignorance of evil; it is the original fund of good born with every one. To preserve as far as possible and to utilize to the

highest degree this primal innocence is the really important business of all education. The conserver of that innocence is the eternal feminine implanted in the child by the mother's influence, and preserved and established in the youth by that complex emotion which is called true love.

The story is told of a city "tough," on trial for vagrancy, who swore that he had no parents. "Why," said the judge, pointing to a drunken creature sitting in the courtroom, "that woman says she is your mother." "Sure," replied the boy, "she's my mother all right; but she ain't the kind o' mother a feller's got a right ter have." That waif touched the very centre of this problem of morality. A fellow who hasn't the right sort of mother has but a sorry chance of turning out well. The mother may not, and need not, be very wise; she need not be of the anxious kind that dogs his footsteps; she may well be one of those whom the world calls stern; but if she be a true woman, if she have that seventh sense which comes with maternity, if she have but little more than the primitive instincts of the dam,—then, in greater or less measure, she is the sort of mother a "feller's got a right to have" and that son will receive and retain, through her, as he can in no other way, the major part of that moral equipment and that ethical incentive which are to make his life worth while.

Says Tennyson:

" . . . From earlier than I know  
Immersed in rich foreshadowings of the world,  
I loved (a) woman . . . one

Not learned, save in gracious household ways  
Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,  
No Angel, but a dearer thing, all dipt  
In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,  
Interpreter between the Gods and man . . .

Happy he

With such a mother! Faith in womankind  
Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high  
Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and fall  
He shall not blind his soul with clay."

Death, or worse, robs some boys of the first and greatest influence of the eternal feminine,—that which should be exerted through the love of mother and son; but to no normal youth is the second influence of femininity—that which comes through adoration for some transfigured sweetheart—wholly denied. It may be but poor Hodge grinning through a horse-collar, it may be but the stammering worship of a cub for some woman old enough to be his mother, it may be but the frosty thawing, late in life, of some seemingly hopeless bachelor; yet in the life of almost no man is the experience entirely unknown.

This second phase of the eternal feminine, this love of a man for a woman, is, of course, the main foundation of literature, of art, and of that royal romancing to which, very mistakenly, we limit history. The widely read book without a love motive is as rare as the historical event wherein one may not confidently "seek the woman." Yet, in most of those million real and imagined instances, how crude

and clumsy,—yes, how vulgar—is the analysis of the true influence and the actual effect of the eternal feminine. To fathom and describe real love is a task requiring transcending genius, a task of which only a few men, like Dante, Shakespeare and Goethe have been capable. The lesser men writers (excepting a few like Meredith) and especially the lesser women writers, confuse genuine love and its influence with its counterfeits—lust, jealousy, self-seeking, vanity, the mere strut of the male, and their long train of evils. Real love, in its modesty, its purity, its unselfishness, its self-abnegation, its worship, its moral exaltation, is as remote from the simian intrigues of the popular novel as Heaven is from the city slum. Real love does not love a woman, it loves an ideal; and in so far as the personification of that ideal, the actual woman upon whose shoulders, so to speak, its mantle falls, approximates to or comes short of that ideal, the man's life is made or marred. As far as concerns the real things of life,—character, moral strength, unselfishness, right ambition, altruism,—the school of the boy is not in the schoolroom, it should be in the home; and the true college of those enduring qualities is not in Harvard or Yale or any other high institution of learning, it is in the discipline of a man's first—and generally his last—genuine love experience.

I would not imply, of course, that falling in love is the beginning and end of existence; what I do maintain is that whether a man is to have a large nature or a small one, whether he is to be a dynamo or a vegetable, whether or not he is to possess that love

of mankind, that eagerness to serve and uplift his fellows which is what counts in life, depends enormously upon the purity of his ideal of the eternal feminine and upon the measure in which that ideal is realized in the woman he loves. The perfection of the ideal depends superlatively upon the boy's mother; the degree of that ideal's realization rests almost solely with the woman to whom he dedicates his heart.

It may be frankly acknowledged that the ordinary boy is prurient and somewhat foul-minded. If, however, his parents are fairly wise, if his boy friends are wholesome and his girl friends decent, this disquieting phase in a boy's life—which, after all, is mainly physiological—will pass and leave him fundamentally unstained. But he does not traverse the next crisis so easily. That crisis, called "falling in love," comes at least once before he has reached his majority, and while it has many foolish phases and accompaniments, it is generally, nevertheless, the crucial and determining experience of a man's whole life. For adolescence is the second birth—to use Dr. Hall's apt phrase—of a man, the birth into moral and spiritual life; and falling in love is to that spiritual infancy what walking and talking are to genuine babyhood. If a youth gets safely through that critical period, if he finds a woman who not only just then but for all their lives will preserve and strengthen his moral side; or if, thwarted or disillusioned in his affections, he rises above instead of succumbing to the blow, his future usefulness and satisfaction in life are almost certainly assured. But if, hurt in his

pride and disenchanted of his visions, he becomes cynical, reckless, and unambitious, there are immediately bred in him selfishness, sensuality, moral laziness and rank materialism,—and another child of God has become indentured to the devil.

It is a just criticism of contemporary novels and plays that an inhabitant of Mars, reading the one and witnessing the other, would conclude that our minds dwell ceaselessly upon sex problems; whereas, we well know, the normal man or woman is mainly busy with quite other affairs. Yet, while the healthy, manly man is little concerned with sex, it is nevertheless true that—except for some very rare religious upheaval—the great emotions of his life, those which lift him out of egoism, materialism and the almighty dollar, are sex emotions, and that those agitations are most violent, least understood, and farthest reaching during adolescence. If, in that time of storm and stress, that youth has not the anchorage of love for his mother and chivalry towards women; if, having created the image, as most youth do, of an ideal woman to be worshipped and obeyed, he finds the young women of his environment too far below that standard of perfection,—then it is almost certain that, whatever his physical and mental prowess, morally and spiritually that youth will go to wreck. In reading that extraordinary book, “*The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*,” one gains some notion of what strong youth,—young men who are sure to amount to something very good or very bad in the world—go through with in this period when, to the outward eye, they are merely awkward and taciturn

or disagreeably voluble. Like the shoppers in Paris who gayly walked the boulevards unconscious that, a few blocks away, hundreds of human beings, with every shade of courage and of cowardice, were fighting for life in the burning Charity Bazaar, we adults go heedless on, unconscious or forgetful that all around us are callow youth fighting with every degree of courage, or yielding with every shade of cowardice, in the battle for self-salvation.

Fathers and mothers, however, have no right to be heedless. The former's memory, the latter's instinct, should not permit them to leave the boy, unprepared and unsupported, to win or lose the battle as he can. And woe to them if they rush in at the eleventh hour and expect to accomplish, by a day's prayers, entreaties and commands, that to which they should have given eighteen or twenty years of ceaseless energy. The father who keeps spiritually aloof from his son until that boy is approaching manhood and then dares to talk to him of such things as love is certain to be flouted,—as he deserves to be. The mother who presumes to dictate her son's choice in his affections when she herself has given him no right example of womanhood has but herself to blame if he breaks her heart by his choosing. To assert that a mother who stays at home with her boys and girls makes herself their drudge is to be blind to the meaning of real motherhood. It is true that a cook can prepare the children's dinners and that a sempstress can mend their clothes; but can a cook fit a boy for the crisis of adolescence, can a sempstress mend his ruined career?



There is no question of women's rights and women's privileges excepting the right to be of the most value in the world, the privilege of using her special powers to the highest good of mankind. Much of the world's work may be done by either man or woman; but there are certain duties which only one or the other can perform. And if a woman have children, her immediate and paramount duty is to keep her covenant with God by giving those boys and girls the best bringing up that it is possible for them to have. In the matter of that one duty, no other person or agency can take her place, for none other can get the moral hold which, because of the child's early and entire dependence upon her, she is able to secure. The community cares nothing about the individual child; the school can deal with children only on one side; the church can secure but a precarious hold upon a small proportion of them; and the best intentioned of fathers, even if he forsook his special duties as the provider, would be but a feeble substitute for the right kind of mother.

Human customs help greatly in the bringing up of girls, for those conventions keep the daughters close at home, sheltered from serious contact with the evil things of life. Boys, however, early and properly, escape the mother's immediate control, going where she cannot follow, learning from sources that she cannot supervise, meeting outer contaminations and inner temptations which she can hardly comprehend. Yet boys need moral guidance even more than girls, and, great as are the power and the duty of the father in furnishing that moral education, the responsibil-

ity and influence of the mother, for reasons already indicated, are very much greater. And she must fulfil that duty and exercise that control largely through the power of the eternal feminine, which permits her to control the boy, though out of her sight, and to hold him without his suspecting the anchorage of the despised apron-strings.

In at least four ways will the eternal feminine keep the adolescent youth straight and strong and self-respecting. The first is through conscious worship of and loyalty to his mother—provided she has been the “sort o’ mother a feller’s got a right ter have”—holding him back, as would her actual presence, from what he knows would hurt her. The second way (if he has been rightly reared) is through chivalry towards all women and through a dim understanding that some time, not far ahead, the eternal feminine will be made concrete for him, and that every moral transgression will be a hideous and perhaps insuperable obstacle in the path to that woman’s love. The third way is through the unconscious influence of the girls and women that he meets, who, if they have been rightly brought up, should fulfil to a reasonable degree his boyish visions and idealizations of the sex. The fourth and final way is through the wholly unperceived, because ingrained, promptings of the eternal feminine wrought into him by years of loving companionship with his mother,—promptings which, like wings, lift him above dirty, evil and sordid things and keep him in the noble company of those who obey Paul’s injunction: “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever

things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report . . . think on those things."

As the possessor of this priceless power of the eternal feminine, this power which inspires and preserves most of what is best in humankind, woman, without flattery, is unquestionably the superior of man and is the predominant force in compelling the upward and onward progress of the world. What folly for her, then, to waste her strength in seeking so-called equal rights in the matter of those outward, material relations which are of such minor consequence in the eternal scheme. Could she have political and economic equality with men, could she be hail-fellow with them and still retain the eternal feminine, then speed the day of her alleged emancipation! Seemingly, however, the possession, at once, of both masculine rights and feminine power is, and always will be, quite impossible.

A woman is not inherently incompetent to exercise the franchise, to conduct a commercial enterprise, or to live the free life of a man. In the face of so many examples to the contrary, especially in view of the general belief that hers is the keener and shrewder mind, such a contention would be ridiculous. Great questions like this, however, must be looked at as a whole; and the fact must be faced that the majority of women marry, and that to them and to their children the duties of motherhood involve infinitely more than do those of fatherhood to the other parent. Were it possible to limit the franchise

to spinsters, childless wives and dowagers, there could be no serious objection to granting women political equality. But in any extension of feminine activities the mothers must be, of course, included; and for them to enter political life—which, if they are not to imperil democracy, involves vastly more than the mere casting of a ballot—either the new duties must be shirked or badly performed (in either event throwing political power into the hands of those least fit) or the old duties must be neglected, to the incalculable damage of the boys and girls, whose moral up-bringing means more to the progress of civilization than all the ballots ever cast, all the taxes ever paid, and all the laws ever put upon the statute-books.

Women in politics might enact much useful legislation; but the curse of a republic is the prevailing notion that moral evils can be cured by laws and ordinances; whereas history and personal experience teach that the main hope of civilization is in the arousing of a keener sense, among all men and women, of their individual, personal responsibility.

The single way, moreover, in which that sense of personal responsibility for the welfare of the community and the state, the sense that we are our own and our brothers' moral keepers, can be aroused in the general mass of men is for it to be ingrained in boys and girls as they grow up. And the forces which can adequately instill that sense of responsibility are, preëminently, the home forces: the home atmosphere, the home work, the relations of the family, the conscious and unconscious lessons in duty,

self-sacrifice, honor and kindred virtues given by the father, mother and other members of the house. The heart of that little world in which men and women are to be trained for the great world, the headmistress of this school of the home which, from the ethical and spiritual standpoint, signifies more to the growing child than all the public institutions of learning ever created, the power which, from thence, literally and in the best sense rules the destinies of mankind, is she who keeps the home, determines its atmosphere, and directs its energies. Were all the good women in the country to get together and to secure the right to revise all the statutes and elect all the officials, their work would be not only futile, it would be subversive of civilization, if, in accomplishing this political revolution they should at the same time, as they would be obliged to do, abdicate that field in which superlatively the work of character-building, of moral development, of instilling respect for law, of training to govern one's self and others is and must be done,—the field of the individual home. Like the dog in the fable, those good women would have dropped the bone of real power in attempting to seize its counterfeit image of political dominion.

Women in business might raise in some degree commercial standards and they would certainly secure a larger measure of economic freedom. But, aside from the fact already emphasized that a woman cannot engage at one and the same time in making laws—or money—and making human characters, the wholesale injection of women into industrialism

means greater competition, lowered wages, and consequent social degradation. The fact that economic failure means suffering for wife and children is a hard and galling spur to men; but that cruel goad has been a chief incentive to moral as well as industrial advancement.

As to the girl who tries to be a man by aping his small vices, by smoking, swearing, and practising, in Portia's words, "a thousand raw tricks of those bragging Jacks," she is an object as pitiful as is the white-faced schoolboy who, having affronted his stomach with a strong cigar, thinks he has thereby made himself a man.

A secondary, but scarcely less serious, effect of this so-called emancipation would be to cheapen woman in the eyes of man, to destroy for him, therefore, the enormous uplifting power of the eternal feminine. No one today admires the languishing female of our grandmother's time and most men believe that every girl should fit herself for self-support so that she may have the strengthening consciousness of economic independence; but for men and women to wrangle upon the hustings, for the arts, and worse, of woman to be added to the fund of political bribery already at command, for women to enter into the feverish scramble for business, and for them to meet there and elsewhere every man as men now meet one another, would break down all barriers—except perhaps the final one—and chivalry, romance, emotional devotion, all that service of Jacob for Rachel which develops a man and makes him other than the beasts that perish, would be gone.

The so-called subjection (though it is actually the elevation) of women is rooted in reasons much deeper than those of her physical weakness and the selfishness of men. She suffers for sinning as no man is made to suffer in order that she may be forced to set high standards of morality,—standards to which all society is slowly but continuously rising. She is made comparatively weak and dependent in order that there must be a home to shelter her, that home which, as a moral microcosm, is the fundamental unit of society and the essential school of individual virtue. She is subject to centuries-old conventions in order that she may be kept enough apart from man for the element of glamor, of worship, of aspiration to be worthy of her, to enter into a youth's relations with the other sex. Finally, she is tied to her children in order that, in the long years of that blessed servitude, she may infuse into them, both boys and girls, that elixir of the eternal feminine which is the inspirer and the conserver of those eternal hopes, faiths, and uplifting illusions which carry mankind ever nearer to the Everlasting Good.



## XI

## MADAME DE MAINTENON

THE reign of Louis XIV, one of the great spectacles of the modern world, divides itself into three dramas: the first, a farce-comedy of intrigue; the second, a melodrama of extravagance and conquest; the third, a tragedy of defeat and death. The first act—in which Louis himself had little part—was the last struggle of feudalism, a desperate clutching of the nobility at their remnants of independent power. Without steadiness, without cohesion, mere puppets in the hands of jealous women, the provincial nobles, heretofore petty kings in their power and splendor, made a last vain resistance to the Italian, Mazarin, who for selfish ends was subordinating all France to Paris and the court. The second act was a pompous show of tasteless pleasure, of real and mimic war, of unprovoked conquest. It was a pageant of kingliness, graced by sycophants and supported by sweating millions of unheeded supernumeraries. In the third act the scenery begins to totter. The king, tragic now, struts and swaggers to ever fainter applause. His theatre grows smaller and more shabby. Worst of all, those actors who had been trained by Bossuet and by Fénelon to fill his rôle, die in quick succession, leaving Louis and his baby great-grandson alone, the one too old, the other too young, to play the part of King.

Louis XIV had nominally begun to rule in 1643, when he was five years old. The will of his father, Louis XIII, no stronger after death than before, had been set aside, and Anne of Austria, with Mazarin, had assumed the regency. Their usurpation, the Queen's desertion of those who, throughout her stormy quarrels with Richelieu, had taken her part, the bitter disappointment of that hungry faction which, sure of restored power under the queen-regent, was already known as *les importants*, the greater and less intrigue of a corrupt court,—all combined to precipitate one of the maddest, absurdest civil strifes in history, the wars of the Fronde. On the one side of the conflict was Anne—Madame Anne the people rudely called her—clinging to the new cardinal-minister, Mazarin, with a love as fierce as had been her hate of the dead cardinal-minister, Richelieu; sending him into exile as their enemies became too threatening; finding it impossible to live as well as to rule, without him; calling him back to substitute his now welcome abuse of power for her utter lack of power; and always alienating old friends while never gaining new. On all sides of the controversy, sometimes for the queen and sometimes against her, were the *Parlement* of Paris, quarrelsome lawyers with no positively defined powers and no capacity except for ceaseless meddling. In the affray, also, were the numerous Orléans family, fighting for their rights of regency and succession. The Archbishop of Paris, too, and the feudal nobles took a share of blood and plunder as opportunity offered. And back of it all, plotting, lying, deceiving, com-



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manding, and countermanding, were the Duchesse de Longueville, Mme. de Chevreuse, the ridiculous Grande Mademoiselle and a swarm of other intriguing noblewomen, playing at politics and bringing upon France such death and ruin and starvation as even that revolutionary country has seldom known. The whole strife was a war of women, a tragic farce of history, in which the actors conspired openly, hurled deadly curses with reassuring winks, kissed in the morning and fought at night, laid waste and plundered indiscriminately, sister arrayed against brother, mother against son, servant against master. Yet those wars of the Fronde, brought about partly by the desperation of a dying feudalism, partly by hatred of a Spanish queen and an Italian prime minister, wrought two important changes. They destroyed the independent power of the nobility; they centered the life of France at Paris. Thence resulted the unified, bureaucratic government which, notwithstanding its restless changing of rulers, France has ever since maintained. The wars of the Fronde not only made possible the autocracy of Louis XIV, they prepared the way also for the Revolution and for Napoleon. Only to a country ruled, as France is, by a city, would have been possible any of those three phenomena.

Throughout these civil conflicts and for some years afterwards, the young king remained indifferent except to this royal pleasures, letting Mazarin rule for him as Richelieu had reigned for his predecessor. But when, in Louis' twenty-third year, Mazarin died, the king coldly dismissed his memory, dismissed,

too, the iniquitous Fouquet who had stolen even more than had the greedy Italian, and took the burdens of state directly upon himself. More than this, by good judgment or good luck, he put the plundered treasury into the hands of that honest man of business, Colbert, he placed Louvois—a seventeenth century Bismarck—in the ministry of war, and he made Turenne general of his armies. With such servants and by his extraordinary diligence, by his *bourgeois* but most useful love of detail, by his real genius for absolute monarchy, Louis brought France in less than twenty years after Mazarin's death, to its highest pitch of power and splendor. His methods were not exemplary, the proverbial schoolboy can see how temporary his greatness was; but, at that stage of civilization, it was real greatness, and it was a true empire over which the "grand monarch" despotically ruled. Had he died in 1680 he would have gone into history as one of the few real Caesars; unfortunately for him and unhappily for Europe, he reigned seventy-two instead of forty years.

With the exception of the interval between 1661 and 1715, France for nearly two centuries was ruled by ecclesiastics. During the fifty-four years excepted, she was governed by a true king ruling, however, "with the advice and consent" of women. Just how far *Louis Quatorze* was guided by feminine counsel it is impossible to determine; but to one woman, during forty years, he seldom failed to turn for approval, for strength in adversity, for commendation in triumph, for feminine comfort, for masculine advice,—that is, to the Widow Scarron, known as

Mme. de Maintenon. Döllinger calls her the greatest woman in French history. St. Simon, with the exaggeration of hate, terms her an "incredible witch, in whose hands rested politics, diplomacy, the power of reward, of condemnation, of pardon, of religion itself, whose victims were the king and his kingdom." The Church leaned upon her, the people suspected her, the court feared but could not flatter her, and Louis himself, brought by fortune and great ministers to an imperial authority far beyond the control of his own limited understanding, regarded her as a sort of external brain whose sanction gave his royal whims and fiats the touch of intellect needed to make them absolutely infallible.

In the middle of the seventeenth century social France possessed three centres. The supreme centre, the "dazzling sun of Europe," as Louis was not averse to being called, was the king himself. Two lesser orbits were ruled by Ninon de Lenclos, the famous courtesan, and by Mme. de Rambouillet, the first of blue-stockings. About those two women gathered all the wits, men about town, place-seekers, men of letters, and *précieuses* to whom the royal sunshine was not always available; and the recognized path to the more exclusive Hotel de Rambouillet was through the drawing-rooms of the brilliant and perennial Ninon. A leader of this merry procession, a satyr to this lovely nymph, was the cynical, deformed comic poet, Scarron, who, no longer young and apparently approaching his grave, amazed his friends in 1652 by bringing to Ninon's salon a wife, Françoise d'Aubigné.



This Françoise, afterwards Mme. de Maintenon, had passed through the usual troubled childhood of the heroine of romance and herself tells us that the customary prophecy of future greatness had been made regarding her. Of good lineage, she was born in prison. Her grandfather was the great Huguenot, Agrippa d'Aubigné; but her father was the veriest good-for-nothing, and her mother, a jailor's daughter. As a child Françoise was carried to the West Indies, experiencing every peril of sea and misery of land. Early orphaned, she was tossed about from one relative to another, torn from a Protestant aunt whom she loved, and banished to the vinegary household of a Catholic aunt whom she hated, seized in turn by one and the other Christian faith, and regarded by both merely as a brand to be saved from the burning. With no dowry, and no hope of one, with no vocation for the convent, yet seeing no escape from it, Françoise was doubtless glad of the chance to marry Scarron, although she was but sixteen and he past middle age, a confirmed invalid, and hideous to look upon. For eight years, faithfully and tenderly, she nursed this cynical, foul-speaking cripple, restoring to him perhaps some of the wholesomeness of life which he had long forgotten. His death left her a young, handsome, but discreet widow, intellectual if not witty, a welcome visitor in the best society and known at court.

Meanwhile the royal Jupiter of France, tiring of Louise de la Vallière, has transferred his affections to Mme. de Montespan. Her semi-royal children being, as yet, politely ignored, must be educated se-

cretly; but the king is determined that they shall be educated well. What better governess for them, thinks Montespan, than Mme. Scarron, discretion personified, well taught, with perfect manners, and sufficiently in need to be tempted by the king's bounty? The proposition is made, is strenuously opposed, but is finally accepted in deference to royal command. Must not the king be obeyed; and is a woman of ambition, as Mme. Scarron confessed herself to be, to begin her career by forfeiting the favor of the greatest of monarchs? Surely not; so a house with convenient back entrances is taken, the children one by one are smuggled in; since few servants can be trusted, Mme. Scarron assumes much of the drudgery herself; de Montespan makes frequent visits, upsetting the children's discipline with her spasmodic affection and their digestion with her lavished comfits, sometimes violently scolding, sometimes ardently caressing the patient governess, by turns exulting and repenting; and at the front door enter the old friends of the Ninon salon and the Rambouillet salon, wondering, asking no questions, but hastening to spread most scandalous conjectures. A difficult life in itself; made doubly so by the early death of some of the children and the sickliness of the three who survive. For four years it continues, until even Mme. Scarron begins to wonder if the game is worth the candle. Perhaps she hints of this to the king; perhaps it is only his own sense of justice that impels him, in 1673, to acknowledge these poor children,—of whom Mme. Scarron had grown desperately fond and to whom no mother could have

been more devoted,—by bringing them to court. If the governess expected to better her lot by transferring herself and her charges to the palace, she greatly erred. Not only was she now brought into hourly contact with the capricious, childish, imperious Mme. de Montespan, but she began to attract the dangerous favor of Louis who, heretofore, had sneered at her as a blue stocking, not hesitating to express his aversion to her. The children's good training, however, Mme. Scarron's devotion to the eldest, (the crippled Duc du Maine) and the strong good sense and discretion of the woman herself appealed to the king. Soon he begins markedly to notice her, with what effect upon his jealous favorite it is easy to imagine. Montespan, fearful of Scarron's power, is yet helpless without the aid of it. Realizing, as she learns the masterful will and calm tact of this wonderful rival, the weakness of her own petty arts and seductions, she can do nothing but redouble them, wearying the king with her frantic demonstrations. To keep Scarron near is to sign her own death warrant, but to send her away would be, she fears, instant self-execution. So Montespan covers her children's tutor with reproaches, at one hour orders her from the palace, at the next implores her to remain, denounces her to Louis and yet begs him to command that she shall stay. Mme. Scarron, now Mme. de Maintenon through purchase or gift of that estate, weeps, protests, tries to present her side of the quarrel, threatens instantly to depart, but does not go. There is rumor of personal violence between the two women. Even the stern Louvois has to be

summoned from the task of war-making in Europe to the problem of peace-making within the palace. The court is rent with factions, and the unhappy sycophants, uncertain of the outcome of the affair, are in an agony of indecision.

What a comic tragedy! What a bedlam of conflicting ambitions! There sits the poor queen, so much a cipher that none thinks of her, afraid even to talk with his majesty unless Maintenon be by to prompt her; there rails Montespan, no longer loved, but holding the king by the fierceness and clamorousness of her jealousy, hating her children's governess and yet wretched and helpless without her; there flutters the silly new favorite, Mlle. de Fontanges, so puffed with pride that she forgets even the ordinary decencies; and there really rules Mme. de Maintenon herself, torn with every emotion, harassed with every care, trying to save some rags of outward affection for the queen, misunderstood when she counsels Montespan to leave the court, still more misunderstood when she seems to acquiesce in her relations with the king, finding her only consolation in the affection of the Duc du Maine and yet obliged to use even this little fellow as a weapon of warfare, praying to be released from one of the hardest positions in which a woman was ever placed; and yet so fond of power, so hungry for the notoriety of this palatial self-sacrifice, so eager, let us try to believe, to bring the greatest monarch of Christendom back to Christian living, that she cannot tear herself away.

Finally the clergy, hitherto subservient, become

aroused to the scandal of a king who sows wild oats at fifty. Eagerly seconded by Maintenon, they try to bring Louis to a sense of decency. The task is not easy; and the storms continue within the royal household until, at the Dauphin's marriage in 1679, Mme. de Maintenon is made lady-in-waiting to his princess. So, without renouncing that royal favor which is her breath-of-life, the badgered governess escapes at last from Montespan. That fierce, unhappy woman, however, through pressure of the Church and Louis' utter weariness of her, is soon discarded.

From this time until early in 1684, when she became the king's wife, de Maintenon filled a very extraordinary position, a position so extraordinary that, as Mme. de Sévigné has said, no one ever occupied or ever will occupy such another. The king consulted her in everything, obeyed her in everything, even to the point of showing affection towards his wife, until the death of that poor royal shadow; thousands of envious eyes were spying upon her, thousands of evil tongues were longing to speak ill of her, the manners of the times, the friends who loved her, the enemies who hated her, the place-hunters who built their hopes upon her, with rare exceptions the clergy who should have sustained her, were all leagued to force her into taking a false step. But with marvelous coolness, with almost superhuman adroitness, with no help except perhaps that of her confessor, the Abbé Gobelin, she retained, without stumbling, her wonderful influence over the king, and, in proper time after the queen's death, made herself the wife of the greatest monarch in

Europe, at the height of his power, when he might have formed any alliance that he chose. The fact of the marriage is no longer in serious dispute. It took place, probably on the 12th of January, 1684, in Notre Dame, at midnight, in the presence of witnesses and with the sanction of the Pope. Mme. de Maintenon never acknowledged the marriage, she never claimed any rights as queen, every scrap of paper that might bear upon the matter she scrupulously destroyed; yet the fact that she was Louis' wife was tacitly acknowledged then and is accepted now. Moreover, during the thirty-two years of their life together he was comparatively faithful to her and seemed truly to love and to honor her. By force of her extraordinary will she had converted him to sober living and to an active—indeed, a too active—piety.

But what a life she led! What a price she had to pay for her power! There is no affectation in the cry of mental suffering, of deathly *ennui*, of the "vanity of vanities" which fills her letters! She had shaken off, it is true, de Montespan; however equivocal her position, she was justified in her own conscience; she had brought Louis to a moral life; she was making him really a "Most Christian King." But what an existence for a woman of brains, "to amuse," as she says, "a man who was no longer amusable;" to be bound absolutely to the will of a despot who delighted in the minutest details of etiquette, who was never tired himself and who believed that no one else should weary. When he went on his brilliant campaigns,—where, by the way, he never saw a bat-



tle,—Mme. de Maintenon must go too. She must travel, not as she chose, but as he pleased, over hot and dusty roads; she must eat when he bade her, must be gay when he told her, must applaud and flatter and coax as her old despot demanded. And in peace, what a monotonous round of dreary dissipation. For so many, and at such hours must de Maintenon give audience to his Majesty; for so many hours must she admit all the court; state affairs, in the main, have to be transacted in her presence; she must allay the obvious irritation of the ministers, and appear to take no part in their councils; yet must discreetly reply to the king's questions, advise him while appearing not to advise him, and always conceal from him the fact that she has the intellect, the insight, the grasp of affairs which his Majesty has not.

More than this, she has to be a general peacemaker for the royal family, an ever-ready *diplomate* in the complicated affairs of state, an *intrigante* for the good of the Church, and a general *confidente* and go-between for everyone at court. The king and his son, the stupid Monseigneur, are always at loggerheads; it is Mme. de Maintenon who must reconcile and re-reconcile them. The famous Princess Orsini, who is to rule the young ruler of Spain and to befriend France in the delicate business of the Spanish succession, is slighted by the princes, snubbed by the king; it is de Maintenon who, with infinite labor, must repair this diplomatic damage. If the ecclesiastics are ready, as they generally were, to assure Louis that the king can do no wrong, it is de



Maintenon who must remind him, clearly and forcibly, that he has solemn duties and distinct obligations. Through the long desperate years of the Spanish succession wars, when Louis, as he once cried out, can neither stop fighting nor go on, when, at times, France herself seems slipping from his grasp,—in these times and in that saddest of all years when the Dauphin, the Duke of Burgundy, the Princess of Savoy and the Duke of Brittany all die, and to Louis is left as heir only a sickly infant great-grandchild, it is then that he goes to de Maintenon for comfort, for courage, for manliness to play well his part as king.

Louis XIV delighted in artificiality and in circumlocution. As is the habit of inferior men placed in high positions, he hedged himself about with mock greatness and created unnecessary obstacles in order to gratify his vanity by overcoming them. So arose Versailles, seated in an ugly plain, difficult of access, expensive to build upon, its grounds laid out in stiff gardens as commonplace as his majesty himself. Since the region is destitute of water, the king plans vast fountains as its chief embellishment, and wastes unnumbered lives and *livres* in trying to fetch the waters of the Eure to this sandy desert. Its ruins now add a sort of grandeur to the estate of Maintenon which the stupendous and abortive aqueduct, in its building, made uninhabitable. This comfortless palace of Versailles, this unfinished and ruinous aqueduct, are fit symbols of the latter half of Louis XIV's reign. Instead of seizing the glorious opportunities which were easily his, instead of accepting

and enjoying his acknowledged position as the greatest ruler of his day, the *Grand Monarque* must spoil his career and desolate his kingdom by building up impossible conditions and creating artificial obstacles. With fatal obstinacy he pursued and clung to the unnatural, whether it were the clipping of hedges, the restricting of trade, or the dismemberment of empires.

It was of this conventional and rigid life that the free-spirited Mme. de Maintenon had to be the centre; it was upon most shallow, dull and unmoral people that her unusual gifts, her sober intellect, her consummate tact had to be expended; it was with a declining kingdom and an aging king that she had to deal; and it was with all that was most wrong, foolish and unlucky in Louis' reign that she was most closely identified. Françoise d'Aubigné hewed out for herself a wonderful career; but over what weary obstacles she made her way!

Her only haven of refuge was St. Cyr, the school for girls which she had founded. There, at least, she could be herself, could put her brains to good use, speak her mind, feel that she was doing honestly and seeking worthily. In her work of planning and establishing that school Mme. de Maintenon appears at her best. But even to that refuge the court soon follows her. Before she realizes it, St. Cyr is a public show-place, the vain preceptress has lost her head, the girls are being flattered and spoiled, scandal is imminent. At once she lays down rigid rules and converts the establishment,—which she had planned to be unusually free,—into a convent school of the

severest type.

St. Cyr was the one outside interest that the selfish king permitted to his wife; and it was the oxygen breathed there that gave her strength and courage to carry the heavy and heavier burdens which, as the affairs of France grew worse, she was called upon to bear. As Marlborough and Eugène won victory after victory, as Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde and Malplaquet left France weaker and poorer and more humiliated, the popular storm that had begun with the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes burst upon de Maintenon and, at times, endangered her life. The censure that the people dared not visit upon the king was hurled against her in pamphlets, in street songs, in gibes, in scurrilous letters. She was regarded as Louis' bad angel, she was accused of every crime;—of instigating the Revocation, of pushing the Spanish claims, of urging wars, of fostering extravagance, of herself stealing millions of *livres* from the royal treasury. It was even hinted that for some unexplained reason she had poisoned Monseigneur and the Dauphin. It is this conception of her, heightened by St. Simon's slanders, which has come down to us. This foul harpy, to most persons, represents Mme. de Maintenon. Truly she was not a saint; but to the unprejudiced eye it is plain that she never used her piety to cloak personal corruption or malice; that she never ceased to pray and to argue against all warfare; that, with every opportunity, she never used the public funds,—living, indeed, in a fashion almost austere; and that, hounded by begging, place-hunting relatives and

friends, she seldom misused her power for their aggrandizement.

In person Mme. de Maintenon was more majestic than handsome, her face was intellectual rather than strictly beautiful. In manners she was suave, obliging and possessed of marvelous tact. Her mind was of English solidity rather than of Gallic quickness; therefore her letters, while interesting, well-expressed, and often witty, have little of the sparkle of Mme. de Sévigné's. She had an infinite capacity for work, a genius for administration, and a fondness for managing, even to the point of meddling.

The most conspicuous, the most admirable trait in Mme. de Maintenon was her absolute self-control. She was inordinately ambitious, she hungered for admiration, she thirsted for power; but she knew that discretion, dignified humility and studied self-effacement must be her weapons of conquest; and she used them with the skill and persistency of a great general. It was not her beauty, it was not her wit and learning, least of all was it mere good luck that created her social fortunes; it was brains. With cleverness alone, however, she would have been a mere adventuress, like a thousand others. For her career were needed other attributes which in generous measure she possessed: a sturdy conscience and an intense womanliness. She did her full duty as Scarron's wife, she neglected nothing in the rearing of Montespan's children, through every provocation she never forgot her obligations to their mother. In the midst of a corrupt court, the hourly companion of men and women who felt themselves bound by no

earthly and few heavenly laws, called upon to deal with the affairs of nations, to confer with and to influence statesmen and diplomatists, to play a man's part as adviser of Louis, to intrigue against the wildest ministers and ecclesiastics of Europe in one of the most complicated political dramas ever played, de Maintenon never lost a fraction of her womanly grace, her dignity, her modesty, one might almost say, her girlishness.

Hers was the power of the magnet which, seemingly inert, attracts and holds with astonishing force. Having by her care of his children, her womanly qualities, and her tact, won Louis, she never relaxed her domination over him, never neglected the slightest thing which might increase her hold. Doubtless she honestly believed in her mission to convert the king to godliness; but her zeal in that direction did not cause her to forget that she hoped, too, to make Mme. Scarron powerful. Hardly expecting, perhaps, to become Louis' wife, she intended to become at least his master. Having attained the greater prize, her secrecy regarding the marriage was but another triumph of diplomacy. The mystery surrounding them, the consciousness that he might without scandal retreat from them, did much to keep the fickle king faithful to his vows. Moreover, with the marriage acknowledged, Mme. de Maintenon would have been merely a despised and neglected morganatic wife; as it was she retained, honorably, all the rights and authority of a mistress.

Was that authority as great as has been commonly believed? De Maintenon probably had little

power of initiative, but immense power of veto, an authority, however, which she by no means fully exercised. She was so careful, so diplomatic, so anxious not to make a single error in the tremendous game which she was playing, that she became overcautious, missing magnificent opportunities. She came into power too late to stop the invasion of Holland; but she might have stayed the ravaging of the Palatinate; and many lesser mistakes could have been prevented had she dared to risk an open quarrel with Louvois. It is plain that she saw the folly of pushing the Spanish claims; but she realized that it would be humanly impossible to dissuade his Most Christian Majesty from attempting to add Spain and Austria to his dominions. All that could be done was to mitigate the consequences of his rash ambition.

In that worst blunder of Louis' long reign, however, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, this pious, wilful woman took a leading part. This meddling in consciences and moulding of lives was just such work as Mme. de Maintenon liked. Moreover, so conspicuous an act of faith as this was the best possible advertisement of her power over the king, of her zeal in bringing him to serve the Church. But neither she nor the king had any conception of what the Revocation or the acts of persecution which led up to it implied. They were not cognizant of, they were incapable of comprehending, the details of enforcement. Hedged in by courtiers and time-servers, they heard only the happy results of his Majesty's measures, never the story of how those measures



were carried out. The king repeatedly declared against the use of force, de Maintenon was fully sensible of the folly of gunpowder conversions; but both were convinced that heresy is a disease; wholesale apostasy, therefore, did not in the least surprise them. If any one person may be held responsible for the senseless, infamous *dragonnades*, for the banishing of some of the best blood of France, it is Louvois. Had he been honest with Louis, had it been possible for anyone to tell the truth to that old autocrat, it is probable that the king, perhaps even that the ultra-catholic de Maintenon, would have seen the folly, if not the wickedness, of the whole affair. But his Majesty had many early sins against the Church to atone for,—how better than by bringing all his erring sheep back to the fold of Rome? Mme. de Maintenon had piously undertaken to make a saint of this notorious sinner,—what clearer evidence of her zeal and its success than this fatherly, kingly care for the souls of his people? So the wretched, blundering dismemberment of France went on; and she, the woman who was an apostate from the faith of her fathers, whose religious activity had never flagged, who held the king's sceptre in her fine, soft hands, she was and is held mainly accountable. But on a question of faith in those days of religious hate and frenzy, who can rightly judge?















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